

COUNTRY LIFE

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VAL L'ESTRANGE.

THE HON. MRS. ALGERNON STRUTT.

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THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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THE COUNTRY-LIFE MOVEMENT.

UNDER the title of "The Country-Life Movement in the United States," there has just been published in this country and in America a most interesting book by Mr. L. H. Bailey. It comes from the well-known house of Macmillan. The scope of the volume is to analyse the conditions which have created so much alarm among statesmen and thinkers on the other side of the Atlantic, and to suggest remedies. The author, be it observed, is not himself panic-stricken. He tries to follow out the changes that have occurred in their logical sequence, and to lend his influence towards their development in a manner beneficial to his fellow-countrymen and, indeed, to the human race. Although he recognises the significance of the movement which is known as the rural exodus, he has studiously refrained from preaching a back-to-the-land movement. He describes his propagandism as a "world-motive to even up society as between country and city." His point of view is that "the past century belonged to the city; the present century should belong also to agriculture and the open country." In America, as well as in Great Britain, there is evidence enough that people have begun to weary of the life of the streets; but so far their rebellion is only taking the form of choosing residences beyond the city boundary. As a matter of fact, they waste much time in passing to and fro between their homes and places of business. It all means only an extension of the suburbs. In the New York of early days, as in London and other European capitals, the merchant and tradesman was content to live above his shop. He and his forefathers had passed through so bitter an experience

of the hardships of country life that they seemed glad to get into a house where they were safe from the blowing wind and the pattering rain. But as they increased in wealth the vision of green fields and gardens came back to them. They moved outwards and formed the suburbs. But the desire for fresh air and the pleasures of the country grew with the lapse of time. In America, as in England, philosophers came into being who dwelt on the insensate folly of making life a slavery for the sake of accumulating wealth which only came to them at a time of life when they were past the power of using it for their own enjoyment. Thoreau and Nathaniel Hawthorne and Emerson and others preached this doctrine on the other side of the Atlantic. It had long been rooted in the minds of Englishmen, and found expression in the whole of their literature. There are no books fuller of the open air than our own. Chaucer is full of sunshine, Shakespeare seems to have understood nearly every form of country pursuit and open-air pastime. Men like Izaak Walton, White of Selborne and Richard Jefferies gave more exclusive expression to the delight and pleasure of the open air. Their teaching seems to be bearing fruit now in the revolt against submission to town life. But Mr. Bailey says that this particular movement is only a widening of the town area. It is desirable that people should not only have country homesteads, but that a far larger majority of them should engage in rural pursuits.

On two points Mr. Bailey will receive special attention on this side of the Atlantic. The first is the rush of populations to the towns, and the second, the desertion of farms. He tries to explain the rural exodus by showing that the people of America are passing from the rural to the urban stage of civilisation. A hundred years ago nine-tenths of the people were engaged on the land. The proportion has now diminished to a third. He does not explain very satisfactorily the relinquishment of farms, but he hints that some of it is due to well-to-do farmers moving on to cheaper lands. In other cases people who have made their money on the farms are retiring to the town to enjoy themselves. On the very serious question of the diminution in American exports of foodstuffs he says: "It is not to be expected that we shall maintain our former exportation of raw crops." His suggestion about disused farms is that "they might be well utilised in many cases for community or county forestry purposes." It is interesting in this connection to see that this American writer turns his eyes to Great Britain as an example. He explains the increase in our producing power by "the transportation of fertilising materials from the ends of the earth."

The moral is that husbandry in America ought to assume a more intensive form. The time is passing away when it is sufficient to scratch a virgin soil and reap an abundant harvest from it. America is within sight of the time when her farmers, as our own, will have to follow a regular rotation of crops, and do their manuring and cultivation, if not in the same manner, at least in a kindred manner to that followed in Lincolnshire or East Lothian. So the argument is brought back to that of President Roosevelt and the other members of the famous Commission, namely, that the policy which should be pursued is that of conserving the natural resources of the country. Were it followed out, the rest would come in due course. Modern man is sick of the ledger and the counting-house. He likes to do business in the shortest space of time. Aided by the mechanical devices which are now at the command of every office, it is possible for him to transact an immense amount of business in a time that will permit of his having leisure enough to enjoy the country as well. Of those who take a house in the country it is very certain that a goodly proportion will become so addicted to country pursuits and will feel the life of the open air so necessary that they will refuse to return to town. It is a comforting doctrine, even though it sounds a little as though the writer were accustomed to regard everything as being for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Whether that be so or not, it is no small gain that we have the thoughtful men, both in this country and abroad, turning their attention to a problem so worthy of their intelligence. The weakness that is known is already in the way of being remedied.

Our Portrait Illustration.

A PORTRAIT of the Hon. Mrs. Algernon Strutt is the subject of our frontispiece this week. The Hon. Mrs. Algernon Strutt is the daughter of Lord Aberdare; her marriage to Captain the Hon. Algernon Strutt took place on April 26th.

. It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.

COUNTRY NOTES



MODERATE opinion of every kind will be inclined to support the Prime Minister in the declaration he made on Monday with regard to the appointment of magistrates. Mr. Asquith, following the example of Lord Loreburn, is thoroughly opposed to the notion that a man's political opinions should either be an objection to or the cause of his appointment. The proper method is to find out the most competent and eligible candidate; and much is to be said in favour of Lord de Ramsey's way of making no enquiry whatever into his political opinions. Should he happen to be a Conservative, the fact ought to be no barrier to his appointment by a Liberal Minister, and if the state of things should be reversed, the principle may still be applied equally well. It is most important that all who have the purity of public life at heart should use whatever influence and power they may possess to withstand the insidious proposal that the appointment of magistrates should be part of the sweets of office. It would not stop with the unpaid magistracy, but in the end would be sure to affect the paid judges as well. Our Judicial Bench at present deservedly holds the highest reputation in Europe for its unbiassed administration of justice. This would no longer be insured if those who occupied the chief places owed their promotion to political partisanship.

A word of congratulation is due to Sir Walter Gilbey on the happy attainment of his eightieth birthday, which was celebrated on Tuesday last. Country lovers have much reason to appreciate the work of Sir Walter Gilbey. He has been a strong man among agriculturists, as, indeed, he is a strong man wherever he appears. There are few breeds of livestock which he has not done something to improve, and in regard to the revival of the Hackney his part was the leading one. But the great cart-horse has also derived much benefit from the attention he has given it; and he has not disdained to turn his mind even to such cottagers' livestock as pigs and poultry. There are many who have reason to think that this is not the best of Sir Walter Gilbey. He has ever been a generous friend and kind supporter to those less fortunate than himself. We hope that there are still many years of useful life before him in which he may reap the benefit of the golden opinions from all sorts of people that old age has brought him.

The perfection to which the modern forms of the daffodil have been brought by raisers was shown at the Midland Daffodil Society's Exhibition held at Birmingham last week. Flowers with symmetry of form, refinement of petals and brilliant-coloured cups and trumpets were to be seen on every stand, and as exhibition flowers the majority were as perfect as the most ardent enthusiast could wish. Unfortunately, in the tendency for ideal exhibition flowers the other and greater charm of the daffodil—as a flower for the garden and woodland—is in danger of being overlooked. The plea put forward on behalf of the daffodil as a flower for the garden by the Rev. G. H. Engleheart, in the after-dinner discussion on the first day of the show, will, no doubt, commend itself to all who appreciate this flower of spring when grown in a natural and unfettered manner. As several experts present pointed out, the majority of the beautiful daffodils that attract so much attention on the exhibition stand, and for some of which high prices are paid, are

unsuitable for growing in the garden or woodland, and must be regarded solely as exhibition varieties. No one can reasonably object to raisers using their best devices to secure exhibition daffodils of the highest quality. The amateur will always find it amusing to grow them. But for that pleasure there would be a heavy price to pay if it involves the neglect of those varieties of good constitution and clear colours which are easily grown and yet lend so much charm to the spring garden.

Dairy-farmers in the North are extremely dissatisfied with the working of the milk regulations. During the past twelve months several of the most important of their number have been had up before the Justices and sentenced to fines for supplying milk below the three per cent. standard set up by the Board of Agriculture. In the most important cases, it is true, the sentences were remitted, but other individuals have been so discouraged that there has been manifested a very decided tendency to get out of the trade. The grievance is a simple one. The farmer holds that he should not be punished when there is no proof of adulteration, that is, he considers that he has done his part if he sells the milk exactly as it came from the cow without the addition of water or any other substance. No doubt there is a very great deal of reason in this contention, although the experts of the Board of Agriculture might very well retort that a herd of cows must be of poor quality if the milk does not show an average of three per cent. of butter fat. The simple remedy would appear to be that of adding to the shorthorns, which are usually kept, one or two animals that give a richer milk, and whose produce, therefore, would raise the quality of the whole. At the same time, it is rather a drastic method of improving the breed of cattle, that of treating the farmer who gives honest milk in an honest manner as though he were a cheat and a misdemeanant.

A WISH.

When, Dear, my day is over
Greet you the merry morn
And leave me where the sower
Will pass, in sowing corn.

Should lover's lilt or bird's song
Then break the calm I keep—
The wind across the wheatfields
Will sigh me back to sleep.

A. H. D.

Further details have been published about the Scottish Census Returns, and they do not tend to reassure those who regard an augmented population as the best sign of national vigour. It is surprising to find that the increase in many large towns is so small. Glasgow, which at one time almost threatened to become a rival to London, has evidently had its growth arrested. The total population is 783,401, as compared with 760,423, showing an insignificant increase of 22,978; and as Kinning Park has been included in the city area, it would appear that the population is at a standstill. Edinburgh shows an increase of only 2,780, and in five districts there has been an actual decrease of population. For the first time in half a century growth has shown a check. Dundee, too, stands very much where it did; but Aberdeen now exceeds it in population. Perhaps the most significant comment on this state of things is a paragraph which appeared side by side with the Census Returns, saying that two large liners left the Clyde on Saturday with over seventeen hundred emigrants for Canada, and another left with one thousand for New York. But probably the population of Scotland suffers most from the steady stream of young people that flows southwards to London and other English towns.

In connection with all the talk that is going on about the plague of pigeons which are more and more making a habit of coming over to us from the Continent in the winter, it is disquieting to note that in several parts of the country of which we have knowledge—and it is probable that the case is the same in others which we do not know of—the wood-pigeons and also the stock-doves are certainly nesting here this year in greater numbers than usual. It is possible that some recent seasons may have favoured the multiplication of those birds which are native here; but it is also possible to infer that some of the Continental visitors have been staying over here and are nesting with us. If that is so, it makes the case a still more grievous one, for it is difficult to see an end to this increase. At the same time, it also affords an added argument for using every means for destroying these plagues of agriculture, and we may point out once again, as an inducement to the raiding of their nests, that the eggs of the pigeons are excellent eating. Wood-pigeons

and stock-doves nest both early and late. The nests of the former are very easily seen and reached; but the stock-dove, nesting in holes, is not so easily to be robbed of her eggs. A hint which may be of value later on was given by a correspondent advising the soaking of corn, where the wood-pigeons come down to feed, with whisky or some other intoxicant and laying it out for them. It is said that the birds will eat this intoxicating food greedily, and are reduced to a state of helplessness, shocking to a teetotaller, which makes them unable to take flight.

From two of the great societies which are concerned with the knowledge and practice of public arts comes news of important developments. The Society of Antiquaries has arranged with the University of London to present each year to the ablest of its archaeological students a scholarship, of which the proceeds are to be devoted to a post-graduate course. It is stipulated that the study thus endowed shall have relation to British archaeological science, though the actual field of operations may be abroad. By such means the Old Lady of Burlington House (as the society is fondly called) once more exhibits her activity in promoting everything that is best in the correlation of the lessons of archaeology with the development of modern thought.

The Royal Institute of British Architects has taken a step of great importance in the progress of the art, not only in England, but in the British Empire. While occupying pride of place in the past among the bodies concerned with the advancement of architecture, the existence of a smaller body, the Society of Architects, has robbed the profession of that unity which is of the essence of consistent development. Now, however, the members of the society are to be merged in the Institute, and the latter will now press forward the preparation of a Parliamentary Bill designed to secure several important ends. Chief among these is the registration of architects by the Royal Institute, and its equipment with powers of examination and discipline such as are enjoyed by the governing bodies of Law, Medicine and Surgery. By such means a standard of capacity will be set up of great value in protecting the public, and in furthering the recognition of architecture as an art.

With the advent of May comes, or ought to come, an end of the indoor games and the beginning of many of those that are played outside. Last week the championship of billiards was settled for the year by the victory of the present holder, Stevenson, who, after a fight in the first week of which he had the worst of it, won easily. Chess has had a very brilliant season with its cable matches, its university matches, its European tournaments and all the rest. Now it is the turn of cricket. A few preliminary skirmishes, which may be regarded as a prelude to the campaign of the year, were begun on Monday, the first of May. Henceforth, until September brings the autumn mists back, the newspapers will contain daily accounts of scores high and low, of feats of bowling and of batting, comparisons of averages and the analyses of cricket. Po'o, too, assumes its greatest consequence in this month and, though necessarily the game of a few, is attracting more and more public notice, as indeed its character, at once picturesque and manly, entitles it to do. At the same time football, that most popular of all pastimes with the immense crowd, fades into the background.

Whether it was intended or not, there is only one conclusion to be drawn from the Report issued by the Board of Trade Departmental Committee on Railway Agreements and Amalgamations. In this document the keynote of the conclusion is that more economical railway working is only to be secured by "more perfect co-operation between the various railway companies." The growth of co-operation and the complete elimination of competition are regarded as inevitable, and likely to be beneficial both to the railway companies and to the public. Further, it is asserted that the public cannot be protected by any system of sanctioning or regulating agreements, but that such protection can only be afforded by general legislation. Lastly, it is insisted that "the effects of the limited degree of competition still existing between railway companies are not necessarily to the public advantage."

When the romance of books comes to be written, an interesting chapter should be devoted to Caxton's edition of Sir Thomas Malory's "Le Morte D'Arthur," which at the Hoe sale was purchased by Mr. Pierpont Morgan for £8,560. It is the only known perfect copy, and can be traced back to the library of Francis Bernard, the great doctor who, by special command of the King, was elected surgeon to Saint Bartholomew's Hospital in 1686. He was not only a very learned man, but a lover of books who appreciated the external beauty as well as the contents of the library which he brought together.

Dr. Swift tells us how he attended the sale of the library, but bought nothing, when this same copy of "Le Morte D'Arthur" was sold to the first Earl of Oxford for half-a-crown. It afterwards passed into the possession of the Countess of Jersey at a valuation of fifty-two shillings and sixpence. In 1885, Mr. Quaritch gave £1,950 for it at the dispersal of the Child Library, and now for the immense sum we have quoted it passes into the possession of Mr. Pierpont Morgan. Of course, its value is now chiefly that of a relic. Thanks to the patient labour of Dr. Sommers, the text of Malory has been carefully copied word by word, and we can now purchase at a moderate price the book which in all essentials is the same which Caxton printed.

In the first week in May art receives more attention than it does for all the rest of the year, and the Academy Exhibition is at least as interesting this year as it has been for a long time past. Proceedings began with the usual banquet on Saturday night. We remember a time when this was made the occasion for delivering long and important orations on some question of the hour, and the Prime Minister of the day, whoever he happened to be, liked to have some novel point which he could bring forward. Mr. Asquith very pleasantly cast aside this precedent. His speech was the most amusing delivered during the course of the evening, and its fun was enjoyed all the more because it must be admitted, even by the Premier's warmest admirers, that his weighty and pregnant style appears more suitable to the delivery of an irenic than post-prandial pleasantries. Mr. Asquith has added to his other accomplishments that of being a finished after-dinner speaker.

DAY-DREAMS.

The town is full of shadows of country life and ways,
The sooty trees, the sparrows, recall the country days;
The gulls above the river swoop by on snowy wings
But I long to see the common where the nesting linnet sings!

"The children's walk" in London glows with hyacinth and squill,
Arranged in coloured patches, set with all a gardener's skill;
But the children's walk in Surrey is where the bluebells grow,
A sky of blue in heaven, and a sheet of blue below.

In the Park, the almond blossom falls upon the well-trimmed grass,
But iron fence and notice boards constrain me as I pass;
And I dream of open meadows, all as fresh and free as May,
Where a nodding crowd of cowslips lend their beauty to the day.

Through all the busy toil of a city's ceaseless strife,
Above the sound of traffic, and the press of daily life
I can hear the cuckoo calling, and imagine that I stand
Where dreams become reality instead of shadow-land.

W. M. E. F.

In the May number of the *Contemporary Review* there is a delightful paper on the gardens of Chaucer and Shakespeare. It comes very appropriately at the beginning of this month, which Chaucer apostrophises: "O Maye, with all thy floures and thy greene." The writer goes chiefly to the "Knights Tale" for his Chaucerian garden, and not, as we might have expected, to the "Romaunt of the Rose." He ekes out his description with a very apt quotation from the "Kingis Quhair," where King James I. describes the garden of the Tower of London, with which, no doubt, he had been made familiar in the days of his captivity. We can almost fancy sitting in its "arbour green, with wandés long and small, Railed about." There are passages in Shakespeare which could scarcely have been written by one who was not himself a practical gardener. Even the hybridiser of to-day might get a motto from his lines:

You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentle scion to the wildest stock,
And make conceive a bark of baser kind
By bud of nobler race.

At this time of year the Farne Islands, that splendid nursery of sea-birds, begin to attract attention, and the Report of the Farne Islands Association for last year is, to ornithologists in particular and lovers of Nature in general, an interesting little document. It states that the breeding season of 1910 was a very successful one, although it was marked by a calamity in the bird world. At the beginning of August a large number of young Arctic and common terns died, apparently from scarcity of food. In 1895 and 1897 the young died before they were able to fly. Three pairs of roseate terns and a few more razor-bills were observed on the islands. The cormorants on the Megstone suffered the calamity of their nests being washed away by the heavy seas, and on the Harkus and the Wamses the gulls stole their eggs. Such are the annals of these northern islands which form the most effective sanctuary for sea birds that we possess in Great Britain.

It is doubtful whether even that most comprehensive record office, the memory of the oldest inhabitant, could furnish an instance of a spring in which the Welsh rivers generally have been running so low, with the natural result that the fishing, both for salmon and trout, has been very disappointing. That excellent river, the Wye, provided some very good fish right at the beginning of the season: but all through April, which is one of the best months, it was almost unfishable, and unless a great change comes over the scene, there will be little doing even in May, which is usually the best month of all. The coldness of the season has been all against the trout-fisher, and when a shower has come to colour the water and the fly have risen, the few fish that have been on the move at all seem to have been "bulging," pursuing the fly as it bursts its pupal case under the water, and letting the fully-developed March Browns float over their heads without paying them the least attention. Needless to say, they have had no better attention to bestow on the lures which the angler has had to offer them.

The British farmer is generally slow to follow the practices of foreign nations. But he might well take a hint from

something that is done now by the French. There is not a doubt that the way in which the French peasants in some of the best-cultivated districts of that fertile country deal with their manure-heaps might be a useful object-lesson to many of our own agriculturists. Their mode is to heap up the manure with earth, in alternate layers of nine inches or so each. The heaps are made very orderly, with straight sides, quite unlike the shapeless masses into which the heaps in our farmyards are disposed. The goodness of the manure finds its way into the earth laid between, and so, when all is spread on the land, there is not nearly the same wastage by evaporation and desiccation as occurs with our own usual methods. In some parts of France they have a way of spreading out the manure from the cow-byres on the fields before the straw is at all rotted. They let it lie there a while, and after the richness of the dressing has been absorbed by the earth or has gone into the air they rake up the straw and use it again as cow litter. In this way it comes in a second time over as a vehicle for the enrichment of the fields. There is a true French peasant's thrift in this mode and it would be well if our own small farmers would imitate it.

THE MONTH OF GARLANDS.

LIKE the May Day dance, it is to be feared that the May Day garland has gone very much out of fashion. It used to be one of the very suitable observances proper to May Day, and one could not help regretting that

it was not observed last Monday morning, for the merry month opened in a manner that more than justified all the beautiful things that have been said about it by the English poets from Dan Chaucer onwards. If any maidens had wished to improve their complexions in the time-honoured way, by washing in dew, there was an abundance of it for them, since the night, clear and cold without being frosty, had left the tender young grass dripping with it as the sun rose slowly in the hazy grey of a perfect morning. The wind was laid, the clouds had passed away, and a thousand bird voices sang a morning hymn. Well they might to a world that had grown exceedingly beautiful during the fine days that came with the end of April. Fruit blossoms had spread like a white sea over the garden and orchard, so that few people can

remember any parallel to its profusion. Sceptical old fruit-growers did indeed shake their heads and say that there is many a slip between the blossom and the fruit; and they have a superstition that the ninth of May always brings a frost

with it, a frost which generally reduces to very low terms indeed the bright hopes of the fruit-grower in early May. No doubt they speak from long and painful experience; but there are years in which they have been disappointed, and let us hope that this will be one of them. It is hard to believe that Nature should frustrate the plans she has laid for producing such great plenty of fruit in Coronation year. It would be perplexing if we did not know how prodigal are some of her ways, and that she brings into existence millions where she does not mean to save one.

This year the beauty of May is enhanced by the crowding, so to speak, of several seasons into one. The cold weather in early April held many things back, and the brilliant sunshine that we have been recently enjoying has hurried



E. Seymour.

APPLE BLOSSOM.

Copyright



E. Seymour.

DOUBLE CHERRY.

Copyright.



E. Seymour

THEY FADE AWAY SO SOON.

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others forward, so that garden and woodland alike present a strange but beautiful medley. According to a well-known passage in Shakespeare, the daffodils "take the winds of March with beauty"; but even if we count according to the old style, March could not be considered the month of daffodils this year. They are with us yet in all their brave purity of shape and colour. There is no sight more graceful than that of these long-stalked, delicate flowers holding up their faces to the sun in all the varied loveliness which has been imparted to them of late years by the gardener and the hybridiser. This is a flower that not in name only, but in reality, has been improved almost beyond recognition; and yet, much as we delight in the triumphs which science has achieved with this flower, it is doubtful if any finer effect can be imagined than they present when growing in a wild or semi-wild state, although they still in these conditions retain their primitive simplicity of form. It is the colour of the nodding blossoms, when millions blend their individual hues to form a yellow cloud on the grass, that makes them so delightful to the eye. Some like them in woodlands, and certainly they are pretty when showing against the first tender herbage of the spring; they are shaded at least by the trees near which they grow. But to our mind the most beautiful effect produced by wild daffodils is in a certain wide expanse of land that serves the purpose of a park. It may have been that many years ago they were planted here by the hand of man; but, be that as it may, they come up wild now by millions and gladden the eye when the sun shines and a soft western wind shakes the petals. Nature produces an equally striking effect of massing with the bluebells, which are now just coming to perfection. Blue is a colour with an infinite variety of shades, each of which seems when we see it to be more exquisite than any of the others. There is the blue of our English sky as it shows on one of those days of alternate cloud and sunshine, when the dark overhanging cloud is cleft asunder and discloses in its depths the brilliant azure of a clear sky. Perhaps it is association that makes us think it so beautiful, for in this damp and misty clime of ours there is no sight more welcome than that of the vault of heaven clearing after a storm. There is, again, the blue of the sea, which is a reflection of the sky, and yet a reflection so cunning that it introduces a thousand new shades and combinations. We think of the blue sky as unchanging, but the patches of colour on the sea suggest endless mutability; indeed, the epithet most naturally applied to the sea is that of the "ever changing." There are other blues which are seen, not in great masses, but in tiny patches. Tennyson has written of the "little speedwell's darling blue," and it is not more beautiful than the fainter blue of the forget-me-not, tiniest of flowers. There is a blue that comes to the head of one of our little tits, which has a tender grace all its own and belongs exclusively to the spring, that time of the year when the birds keep holiday and are pranked out in the feathers and ornaments which belong exclusively to the time of love and courtship, the time when "the iris changes on the burnished dove." But a mass of bluebells growing in a moist dell and so spread out by years that they cover a large space is perhaps the most charming of any. It is still to be seen even comparatively near the metropolis, despite the ravages of some hundreds of little hands that go out to collect these flowers for sale on the streets of London. No one would grudge them the blooms which are at once able to gain a few pence

and bring a touch of the country to many a poor home where it would otherwise be absent, but they are not content with pulling and cutting. The custom grows for them to go to the country armed with trowel or little spade, so that they may take the flowers, and especially the bluebells, up by the roots and carry them for sale to suburban streets, whose owners fondly hope that they will decorate their smoky gardens. This is a practice very characteristic of the month of May, and is rapidly denuding the country places near the capital and other towns of those spring flowers which are so delightful to the eye of the pedestrian. A greater sufferer even than the bluebell is the primrose. Every year this flower is driven further afield because it is most ruthlessly uprooted in order that it may be sold to town-dwellers. There are still places within ten, twelve or even fewer miles of the Bank of England where the primrose grows wild in its native profusion; but it is unwise to mention them, because once they become known destruction is almost inevitable. Violets suffer in a scarcely less degree, and even the cowslips are often carried off by myriads. The question arises whether some steps will not have to be taken to protect our wild flora, some measure akin to the legislation directed against the destruction of wild birds. Flowers are even more delightful than the birds, and, as a rule, are not hurt through their blooms being taken; but measures ought to be adopted to forbid the use of the trowel or any other implement used in digging them up by the root.



Miss E. Shifner. *FLUTTERING AND DANCING IN THE BREEZE.*

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But to return to the combination of colours offered by this May. It is, perhaps, more visible in the garden than in the field. At present the dominating colour, where there are fruit trees, is given by the blossoms of the plum and the cherry, and in wild woodlands that exquisite tree, the wild cherry, offers a most entrancing picture. Some weeks ago, when it was freezing hard and blowing strong, we read in the newspapers that the pear blossom had been utterly destroyed; but this



W. Selfe.

MAY ON THE RIVER.

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could only have been in unusually early districts. As far as our own observation goes, the pear is only now coming out in flower, and over a considerable tract of country through which we passed on Saturday last there was only an indication of the blossoms coming out. The district embraced parts of three counties in the South of England, so that it is safe to say generally that the pear is as yet untouched by frost, and awaits the luck or fate of the next ten days. Apples, as far as we know, have not yet come into full blossom. Here and there the beautiful flowers are making their appearance amid an unusual scarcity of leafage, for what the east wind did was to curl up and send back the opening leafage; the

flower-buds were not sufficiently far forward to be seriously injured.

Of course, we do not mean for one moment to say that there were not orchards, particularly in the far South of England, where irretrievable damage was done; but taking the Midlands and the counties around London, it is safe to say that the apple blossom has not, so far, been injured. In fact, never in the years that can be remembered by the oldest inhabitants was there such a splendid promise of fruit as is held out by the present May. Whether it will be fulfilled or not depends upon that fateful frost which is traditionally expected on May 9th.

RACQUETS.

THE amateur championship reached the challenge round without any really exciting match, except the one in which Denison beat his fellow Old Carthusian, Leatham, with whom he won the Public Schools Racquets Championship. But the matches have at least revealed one good fact, namely, that at last there is a young player who is coming on. Denison, however, was hardly expected to succeed against so experienced a player as Baerlein, who has been the winner of the championship on six occasions. But he struggled gamely, and kept up several very long rallies. Denison is a strong player, with a good and safe stroke, a useful service and a fair amount of activity. In his match against the writer he played a first-rate game, as indeed he did against that brilliant player, F. Browning.

E. M. Baerlein, Denison's opponent on Monday, May 1st, for years has been the leading amateur exponent of the game, and who recently even ventured to play the professional English champion, C. Williams, on equal terms, and to make a good fight of it at Queen's Club. But the event that has aroused more interest than any other for many years in the racquet world was the match for the championship of the world last Saturday at Queen's Club. The gallery was crowded right up to the top row, where I sat with several members of the great racquet family, the Grays.

Jamsetji, the Parsee, one of the most sportsmanlike and delightful of professionals, agreed to come over to England to play C. Williams, the Harrow professional. Jamsetji might have held the championship and insisted on his challenger coming out to India; or he might have been beaten by, and handed over the championship to, one of his own family—a family of players. But from Bombay he came over to this recently damp and inhospitable

climate, and on Saturday was "butchered to make a British holiday," for Williams was too young and quick and severe for him, and won the first half of the match by four games to nil. The rest of the match will be played at Prince's. The scores on Saturday were 13-all and 5-2, 15-2, 15-9, 15-8.

There was a great contrast between the West and the East. For the knock-up, Williams came into the court looking like a boxer, well-trained and alert. He slashed about, as Public School boys do. Jamsetji followed, quiet, with his little velvet cap on his head, and with a half-smile—a sad smile; for Jamsetji strikes one as rather a lonely man, and as one who realises that he is not among his own people. In the first game the play began well. Williams got a slight lead, but lost it, and missed several easy strokes. Jamsetji served very well until Williams began to volley; the volley, a *tour de force*, took the Parsee by surprise. Jamsetji was foot-faulted once or twice during the match, and this also seemed to disconcert him; and his service throughout was far from its best. It appeared to lack its usual curve and sting. Williams was superior in his side-wall play—he made many brilliant strokes off the side wall—and in his power of killing balls down the left-hand side of the court, and his service was also severe. His returns reminded one of Peter Latham at his best. In the second game Jamsetji fell off completely. He rarely killed the ball. He did not look keen; he looked rather paralysed. Every now and then, however, came a glimpse of the real player. The way in which Jamsetji killed the easy fore-hand stroke was inimitable. He simply smothered the ball. In the third game he was hitting all round and giving Williams an opening time after time, except for a short run of service. It seemed to me that he suffered from

an epidemic of breaking the strings of his rackets—a most annoying handicap. The rackets with which he played the second and subsequent games appeared to me to be dead. And in a match of this kind the rackets must be absolutely of the best. I remember well a match in which I had to play with a new racket bought at the club; it was the worst racket I have ever tried. It bore to a real and true racket the same relation that a refractory donkey bears to a Derby winner.

In the fourth game it looked as if at last the Parsee had begun to move when he went ahead to 6-2; but Williams served brilliantly and made it 6-all. Then Jamsetji went to 8-6 and served a double fault. He smiled his pathetic smile, for he never shows anger or disappointment; but the match of the day was now over, for Williams went to 8-all and then to 15-8.

The pace was too much for the Parsee. I do not think that Jamsetji has ever played against a faster game. Certainly his practice for years in the slow court at Bombay, where he can keep



WILLIAMS TAKING OFF THE BACK WALL.



JAMSETJI SERVING.

his muscles lithe, utterly unfitted him for this rushing and hustling game in London. But he set a splendid example of good temper. Since his arrival in England, some weeks ago, he has endeared himself to us all. His quiet, simple manner, his quaint sayings, and his wonderful command of the game when he has time to "get there," have been a delight to us. Whatever happens at Prince's, Jamsetji need not regard his visit to England as a mistake. We, and the game of racquets, are the better for his coming.

EUSTACE MILES.

THE LONDON AND BRIGHTON COACH.

NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE was a gay sight on Monday morning. It was the first day of the Coaching Season, and between ten and eleven o'clock five stage-coaches set out upon their journeys. A coach runs to Brighton every day and back the next. For the fourth year Mr. Alfred Vanderbilt drives the "Venture" out of London on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, with Scarlett as guard; and on alternate days Lord Leconfield runs the "Old Times," with E. K. Fownes. A coach which has just been built and christened "New Times" is driven daily by Mr. Richard Budgett to Guildford and back, with Payne as professional; the "Tantivy" goes to Esher, while Mr. Craig McKerrow, with the "Reynard," follows the Windsor Road, and another "Venture" runs every day, including Sundays, to Hampton Court. Our pictures were taken during a trial trip of Mr. Vanderbilt's "Viking" at the end of last week. Though there were some heavy showers, the road could not have been in better condition; and there was none of the

freshly-laid tar which is so injurious to horses whose skin is splashed with it.

Though the Brighton stage was one of the latest to be put on the road, more than a hundred years after the Southampton Weekly Stage began in 1648, the Brighton Road was almost the first good road in England. There was little more than a cart-track to Brighthelmston before the Regent "discovered" it; in 1811 there were at least four ways of posting thither. The oldest road lay through Croydon, Godstone Green, East Grinstead, Uckfield, and Lewes. The distance measured from the south side of Westminster Bridge was fifty-eight miles and a-quarter. A shorter and favourite way was by Croydon, Merstham, Reigate, Crawley and Cuckfield, exactly fifty-three miles; and this could be shortened still more by driving to Cuckfield by way of Redhill and Balcombe. An entirely different road ran from the West End through Epsom, Dorking and Horsham, and it is this one which has been used by most of the modern coachmen. Croydon, with its narrow streets and heavy motor-traffic, is impossible now for coaches, and Reigate Hill is better avoided, as much for coachman, horses and passengers as for the guard who had to jerk the drag from under the wheel without stopping the coach, one of the most difficult of all the things which a guard has to do. Mr. Vanderbilt follows the road through Roehampton, Epsom, Leatherhead, Dorking and Horsham. Three mornings in the week the "Venture" may be seen with a magnificent team of greys making its way from the Hotel Victoria along Pall Mall, St. James' Street and Piccadilly, while Scarlett's horn makes the houses ring with "Tunbridge Wells," or "Rory O'More."

The first change is at the King's Head, Roehampton, where the greys are replaced by another splendid team of dark bays. Only three minutes are allowed, but as there are nine changes before Brighton, the time spent in changing soon mounts up. However, Mr. Vanderbilt changes more quickly than the drivers of the old mail coaches were accustomed to. In a bill of

instructions for mail coach-drivers, issued about 1840, which was illustrated in COUNTRY LIFE last November, it is laid down that "five minutes for changing four horses is as much as is necessary; and as Time, more or less, is to be fetched up in the course of the Stage, it is the Coachman's duty to be as expeditious as possible. . . . By Command of the Postmaster-General."

London is hardly left behind until after the second change at Old Malden; but after the third, at the King's Head, Epsom, it is obvious that a new country has been reached, where everyone takes an interest in the roan and three bays and the bay leaders and brown wheelers which take their places. Mr. Vanderbilt's ten teams maintain an extremely high level of excellence. There is not a single ill-matched horse among them. All are bred in America, and seem to be of a type not found in England. They are big, powerful horses, larger than the average hackney; their action is very pretty, not at all extravagant, and their legs are thrown well forward in trotting, so that when clear of the suburbs they can easily keep up an average of ten or eleven miles an hour. The whole distance, sixty-three miles, is covered in seven and a-quarter hours—fast travelling for a coach when the time spent in changes and the hour for luncheon are deducted. Luncheon is eaten at the Burford Bridge Inn, Box Hill, twenty-five miles out, where mine host has much to say concerning George Meredith and those who come to visit the cottage where he wrote. The journey is continued by easy stages. Dorking is passed and fresh teams are put in at Capel, at Horsham four of the most superb bays, at Cowfold, Henfield and Pyecombe. The guard comes of three generations of guards and coachmen. He will tell you what is to be seen from the road—the country houses, and who live in them; the Devil's Dyke, from which you are supposed to see fifty-seven churches; the Carthusian monastery at Cowfold, a landmark half the county over; and a discussion arises as to whether the monks make as



SPANKING ALONG.

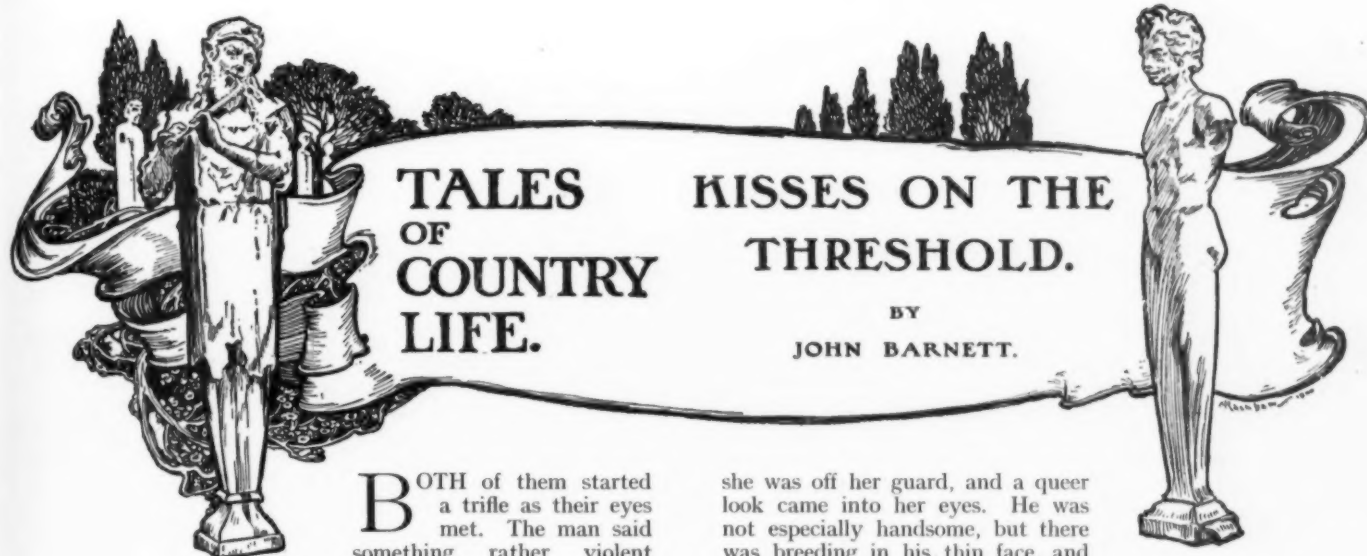
good Chartreuse as they did formerly. Then there are the little accidents which have happened on the road—in particular the stone wall where the "skid-pad" of a coach is embedded in memory of a guard who was killed at that spot. You are shown, too, the hollow near Patcham where Sayers fought his first fight, and the Downs near by where the great bustard used to be hunted with greyhounds. And you change horses for the last time at Pyecombe, where once upon a time they made the best shepherds' crooks in England.

It is not all imagination that makes the roadside country and the roadside children grow more beautiful as the coach travels southwards. The landscape becomes more open, the waysides are starred with lady's smocks and primroses and bluebells, and the inhabitants whom Horace Walpole found so "savage" come out, one and all, at the sound of the horn. At one place live two little girls who come and wave an American flag. One day they sent a post-card of apology to the guard because they had not been there when the coach came by. And there is another little maid at a certain turning who always comes in pink sash and white pinafore—Mr. Vanderbilt's colours. She never misses the coach. It happened that one of the passengers had never been to

Brighton before. But he came in the way that is best of all, and in a merry company. Coaches and roads have not been altered very greatly since Dr. Johnson posted to Brighthelmston and bathed there, and refused the offer of a private carriage unless the owner came too. And since the Doctor, what a company have driven along the Brighton roads! Lamb, Hazlitt and Sydney Smith; Fanny Burney with the Thrales; Pitt; the Regent, and with him the Czar coming to witness a fight for the championship on Crawley Down; "Young *sprigs* chaunting and swiping till they dropped off their *perches*; while the *ould ones* felt the influence of the *dustman*, and were glad to *drop* their *nobs* to obtain forty winks. Those persons whose *blunt* enabled them to procure beds, could not obtain any sleep, for carriages of every description were passing through the above towns all night. Things passed on in this manner till daylight began to peep. Then the *swells* in their barouches and four, and the swift-trotting fanciers, all hurried from the metropolis and the road exhibited the bustle of the *primest* day of Epsom Races." It may all be read of in "Boxiana." Or you may imagine yourself to be seated opposite Mr. Jos. Sedley and Captain Crawley. The coach will jumble you 'insensibly into some sort of familiarity.'



AT BOX HILL.



TALES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

KISSES ON THE THRESHOLD.

BY
JOHN BARNETT.

BOTH of them started a trifle as their eyes met. The man said something rather violent beneath his breath with regard to the perversity of Fate and a steward that had chosen this one place for him at table; the woman—heaven only knows what she thought! Then their hands had touched mechanically, and they were seated side by side.

The man, as he unrolled his napkin, decided swiftly that cool friendliness was the one possible *role* under the somewhat awkward circumstances. He was of the type that can generally be trusted to relieve tension, to do the correct thing. It is true that at his last meeting with this woman he had spoken with something of the raw frankness of a savage, but—his provocation had been strong. Even the well-fitting mask of an ultra-civilised gentleman is apt to slip at times. But all that was an eternity of two years ago, and the mask, it was to be hoped, was now securely in position.

So he spoke with a little cool smile of the smoothness of their passage, and Clare Revington answered him with entire composure. But her response did not lend itself to continued speech, and Geoff Travers, feeling that he had done his duty, applied himself to his dinner. Mrs. Revington found herself watching with a kind of fascination the one-handed awkwardness with which he ate, and almost against her will she spoke with a dangerously personal touch.

"Is it not very difficult—with only one hand?" she asked.

He glanced at his right arm, encased in plaster of Paris and strapped across his chest.

"It is a nuisance, but I am getting used to it," he answered. "I came rather a purler at Sandown."

"Yes, I read about it," she said, so quietly that he did not notice her slight shiver. "It will stop your riding for a time."

"That is the worst of it," he agreed, gloomily. "But—I did not know you read the racing news?"

She met his glance quite evenly. "I sometimes glance at it," she said, which was an under-statement. "Your name happened to catch my eye."

He nodded. "Yes—quite wonderful how one lights on a name one knows," he agreed, carelessly.

She was grateful for his easy acceptance of her explanation. She would not for very much have had him know her painful interest, for the last two years, in every cross-country race. Gentlemen riders were always eligible, and she never knew—from day to day she never knew—

"That paper said you were quite famous for your—daring riding," she remarked, with a fine assumption of indifference. As a fact, "reckless" had been the actual adjective employed.

He shrugged his shoulders. "They put a marvellous lot of nonsense in the papers," he said, listlessly. "I'm pretty careful, really."

That was not the truth, but the truth might have been construed into a request for pity. And it was hardly his habit to go about asking for pity. As a matter of plain fact, some sort of excitement had been actually necessary to him for the last two years, and cross-country racing provided the one thrill that never palled. Hunting was scarcely to be relied on. It was good enough in its way, of course, but one was never certain of a run, or pace, or really big country. But if he had admitted all this to Clare it would have been equivalent to saying, "You were so important to me that when you played me false I had to risk my neck habitually to help me to forget!" He would be sorry to add to her triumph by that weak admission.

But she saw him smile to himself with a certain bitterness, and it is possible that she read his thoughts. And for a moment

she was off her guard, and a queer look came into her eyes. He was not especially handsome, but there was breeding in his thin face, and she liked the keen directness of his grey eyes. She had always liked everything about him—his slight, wiry figure, his pluck—everything.

So she spoke rather hastily, with marked coldness. "Have you been to Canada before?"

He shook his head. "Some silly business question cropped up, and if one can't race or hunt one may as well be on the sea. And you?"

She had expected the question; had put her own that it might be asked. She answered it with deliberation.

"It is my first visit, too. My husband has an appointment, and I am going out now to join him."

There followed a very brief pause, hardly noticeable, and then, "Ah, yes. Quite so," he said, coolly, accentuating his slight natural drawl.

He was glad she had reminded him, had pulled him up. He had actually been near for the moment to forgetting her husband. And the man was a most concrete fact, always to be borne in mind. And yet, even now, one had not become entirely hardened to the notion of Clare with a husband. Queer that, and foolish, after two years! She was eating, or pretending diligently to eat, and he stole a glance at her. He had been right in his first impression—she *had* lost something of her old wonderful freshness. That was probably inevitable. But she was still too good, oh, much too good, for any—other husband! Her face had a suggestion of coldness now, which seemed to contrast oddly with her red lips and her red-brown eyes and her hazel brown, red-gleaming hair. But certainly she *was* cold. Otherwise—otherwise she would never have—

"May I venture to express the hope that you are happy?" he said, abruptly, with a smooth harshness, and the words did not seem odd to him, so far had he drifted in his thoughts from the cool, studied friendliness of his first remark.

But to her they were strange and startling. She flashed a curious, almost frightened, look at him.

"Why should you ask?" she began. And then, "Yes, yes, I am quite happy. He—my husband is very good to me—always."

He nodded. "I am, of course, most glad that you are happy," he said, gravely. But he smiled as he thought of the words that he would say to her if they were not both so highly—civilised. If he had been a mere barbarian who could blurt out his real thoughts, what would he say? Would he not suggest that a woman who treated a man as she had treated him did not deserve the happiness of which she spoke? She had thrown him over after leading him to think she loved him (God knew the whole thing was trite enough!), and she had married callously, frankly for money, and yet—she was happy! There did not seem to be much poetical justice in real life. And he himself was still paying. He was still a fool about her; she still had power to hurt him. Then he remembered that, as a fact, he had already said these things to her; that two years ago he had stormed at her like any half-bred, disappointed fool who did not know how to lose, and his face changed. He did not like to remember that scene, for, after all, she was still Clare—

She had been watching him, and she saw his face soften, saw a certain light that she remembered come into his eyes. In the silence she had been thinking her own thoughts, and somehow, foolishly enough, they had been far apart from the bitterness of his. She had allowed herself to dream until her dreams had frightened her. And now she said a strange thing, almost as one who makes appeal for generosity.

"Geoff," she said, using his old name apparently without thought. "He—my husband loves me, really loves me!"

He looked up with surprise, and their eyes met. And as they gazed, for what seemed a long while, something that might not be put into words became fully clear to them both. And to the man another thing became clear—the meaning and the force of the appeal that she had made. He dropped his eyes at last with a little grave nod.

"I see, yes—I see," he said, slowly.

When they spoke again it was of things that did not matter.

Two nights later Geoff Travers awoke suddenly from sleep just before the dawn. He had been dreaming, no matter of what. But in his sleep there had come such a smile to his lips as they had not known for some little while in waking life. He woke with a grinding, dragging crash in his ears, and with the knowledge that the engines had stopped. It was apparent enough that some mischance had occurred; but, with the mocking happiness of his dream yet raw in his heart, he told himself that he scarcely cared if the ship went down before he could make his way on deck. But Baker, his servant, broke in on him ere long, half dressed and with all a Cockney's fussiness, but with the question of his half-crippled master's safety paramount in his mind. He was a small, wizened man who had been with Travers since he went down from Caius, who was sacked with regularity once at least every three months, and who yet contrived, for all his blundering, to be somehow indispensable to his master. With his help Travers got some clothes upon himself, and they gained the deck coolly enough after the first rush had poured up the companion.

A yellow, clinging blanket of fog enclosed the swaying deck and a small space of grey, heaving sea. Somewhere behind it in the east a red dawn was breaking, but the light was dull and treacherous. The Hermione had struck a water-logged derelict wallowing on a level with the water, almost the one sea danger against which no care can guard, and had ploughed across it, tearing in her bows and a portion of her bottom. The decks were crowded with the foreign emigrants that she carried, wild with terror, screaming in many tongues to many saints and half naked. They fought around the boats in raving, howling mobs, hindering the men who were clearing away the tackles. For already the Hermione was settling down.

We are a patient people, accustomed to accept as truth an often-repeated statement, and so we have almost grown to believe the tale of our own degeneracy that our rivals have so steadily published through the world. It may be true; but the newspapers told a plain and not uncommon story a year or so ago of the scene aboard a sinking liner of another nation than our own, a story of wild and shameful panic, of a fierce general rush for the boats, of passengers trampled under foot and stabbed by the men to whom they should have looked for help. That story included the deadly and significant fact that well-nigh all the crew were saved, while many of the passengers, both women and men, were drowned or knifed. We are, no doubt, a contemptible people, but—no British ship has ever been disgraced by such a tale as that.

We are, however, unfortunately addicted to trusting to blissful chance, and the Hermione was under-boated. One of the boats was crumpled against her side almost as soon as it touched water, and it was apparent that the rest, however crowded, would not suffice for all her complement. But among the crew and the better class of passengers there was no panic, with few exceptions.

Perhaps for that fact some little grudging credit might be given to the skipper, overlooking all from the bridge, a dimly seen figure in the tawny fog, with keen eyes and bearded, impassive face. He had given his orders for the provisioning and lowering of the boats, and knew that he could trust his officers. He knew also, one supposes, that for him there was no shadow of hope unless help came with speed, that he must keep his stand quietly as an example of steadiness for all, until the Hermione lurched drunkenly to her last resting-place. But that is so common a practice that we have ceased to marvel at it or call it great.

Geoff Travers, with Baker beside him, was watching curiously the jam of emigrants awaiting their turns, having been reduced to some degree of order by the sight of the officers' pistols, when the second officer touched his shoulder.

"You can't shift for yourself with that arm, Mr. Travers," he said. "The captain says that you're to come in my boat. If you'll come along, we're manning her now."

Geoff Travers shrugged his shoulders and pointed to the emigrants. "Hang it, man, they seem so keen on living that it would be a sin to disappoint them!" he drawled, lazily, "Besides, there's a woman or two yet among those poor devils, and I don't rank with the women yet."

But the second officer had a liking for Mr. Travers, and—it is an undoubted fact that first-class passengers loom more

worthily than steerage folk, always excepting women and children.

"It's captain's orders," he said, curtly. "Places will be found for all the women, you may be sure. Please come along, Mr. Travers; there's very little time."

But Mr. Travers had glanced again at those bewildered, whimpering, uncleanly aliens with the life hunger shining fiercely in their eyes.

"Oh, I'll see you damned first, Mr. Orchard!" he answered, very genially. "I'm not ungrateful, but please don't waste your time with me."

And the second officer, seeing that persuasion was useless, hurried away.

Clare Revington had heard the little conversation from where she was standing in the shelter of a deck-house. She had come on deck at the first alarm and had been almost carried off her feet by a rush of the emigrants. She had shivered with disgust, and had then been conscious of a wild impulse of panic; but she had fought against it with rather odd strength, for she had never imagined that she was brave. She had crept to the lee of the deck-house, and with pale lips and clenched fingers had struggled to keep herself in hand. So she had stood for what seemed very long, until she had heard Geoff Travers' voice as he spoke with Mr. Orchard, and she had listened to his flippant words with a strange lifting of the heart. And in that moment a curious resolve formed in her mind.

Almost mechanically she turned to follow Travers as he moved forward with Baker at his heels, but the ship's doctor came hurriedly towards her.

"What are you doing, Mrs. Revington?" he cried. "All the ladies are in the boats, and you must look sharp for your place. Come along at once!"

She shook her head and answered with an unconscious recollection of Geoff's words.

"I can't go yet. There are a few of those poor foreign women still on board. They want saving more."

"You are mad!" the doctor cried, testily. "Come instantly, or it may be too late!"

He caught her shoulder, to bring her forcibly if necessary, but she flashed upon him such angry eyes that he dropped his hand. Then she looked away from him at once.

"Thank you very much," she said, almost absently, beginning to walk forward. "But I should really prefer to wait."

The doctor stared at her in angry wonder; but there were others to look to and he could not wait for one. He hastened away, and Clare Revington had already ceased to think of him.

Mr. Travers had found a seat upon the deck out of the crowd, and was cursing rather freely because he had no matches. Then he turned to Baker.

"You may be able to find a seat in one of the boats, you know," he said, quietly. "I don't want you to wait on my account."

Baker grinned, very conscious, like a true Cockney, of his own courage.

"What's good enough for you, Mr. Travers, 'll do for me," he said. Mr. Travers characteristically missed a fine chance of emotion.

"You must please yourself, Baker," he said, not unkindly. "But I'm not sure that you're right." And at that moment he looked up and saw Clare Revington come slowly along the deck towards him.

"May I sit with you a little while, Geoff?" she said, as quietly as though the last two years had never been.

"Yes, surely," he answered, with some astonishment. "But they will find room in a boat for you, of course. Let me help you to the gangway."

"No," she answered, still speaking quietly. "I'm not sure that there is room for all, and anyway—Besides, I heard how you answered Mr. Orchard yourself."

He smiled rather grimly.

"It is a little different for me," he said. "But it is—like you. You were always brave, I remember. And yet—it seems a pity."

She did not answer him for a little while. She looked away from him, but with eyes that did not seem to see the yellow fog banks and the crowded boats upon the wild, grey water. And then quite suddenly she shivered.

"You are cold," he said, anxiously. "Let me give—"

She turned to him, and there was a little colour in her face.

"No, I'm not cold," she said, trying to smile. "But I'm—I'm not very brave, I think. Would you mind—would you let me sit close to you? I feel—lonely, and you are braver and stronger than I."

And that sent an odd glow tingling through his veins.

"You make me very proud," he said, gently, and as they moved near to each other he laid his hand above hers. And he knew that he would not have exchanged his present place

for any chance of safety. He even spoke aloud, half consciously, "It—it is rather good to be here," he murmured.

She made a little sharp movement at his words, and seemed about to speak. But for a while she said nothing. It was as though the walls of fog beat back the raucous, unceasing shriek of the syren. Suddenly that shrill summons for aid died away, and in the silence they heard the drip of moisture upon the deck. The Hermione was very low in the water now, and was reeling in a sickly fashion upon the sullen rollers. And in a minute Clare Revington broke the silence.

"Geoff," she said, "do you think that we are going to die?"

A comber curled and broke over the bulwark as she spoke, and drenched them with its grey flood. Geoff Travers glanced at the dark water so very near to the rail and shrugged his shoulders.

"There is always a chance," he said; "but I think——"

She nodded. "Yes, I see," she said, quite eagerly. "Well, I'm—not sorry, and I'm not afraid now, but I want to tell you something—first. I would not have spoken before, nor have let you speak, but it can't matter if we are going to die. There won't be any treachery in speaking—now . . . Geoff, dear, I love you. Can you forgive me for what I did? I spoilt your life and my own two years ago, and it's very late in the day now, but perhaps it's just not too late."

He said nothing about forgiveness. He never thought of it. He put his left arm awkwardly about her shoulder, and there was a wonderfully transfiguring smile upon his lips and in his eyes.

"Clare, did you love me—did you really love only me all the time?" he whispered. "I—I don't care what has happened, if you can only tell me that?"

"Yes, dear," she answered, very simply. "It's the truth. I was blind and mad and everything that was horrid, but—there has never been anyone like you for me—really."

He managed to draw her closer, despite his crippled arm, and their lips touched. Both of them in that moment, with death in the damp air about them, were untroubled by the shy reserve of race and training. It was as though they were alone together, and they had but a little time, they knew. Upon the wet, swaying deck the woman clung to the man, listening with something like ecstasy to the tender extravagances that he whispered. Neither of them spared a thought for Baker, who, indeed, had slunk a little distance from them with a half-cynical smile upon his lips and an odd twinge of jealousy in his heart. They believed for certain that they were to die, and it seemed to them that though life was very crooked, yet it had straightened out divinely at the end. . . . And it was as though Fate laughed maliciously at the trusting madness of their folly.

They did not hear a distant hooting that grew louder, nor heed a sudden cry of incredulous joy from the crowded boats that hung upon their oars within hail of the wallowing Hermione. They knew nothing of the coming deliverance; it was Baker who at last judged it well to bring them back to sanity.

"Mr. Travers, sir," he said, touching his master's arm; "here's another steamer turned up out of the fog to take us off!"

And the man and woman looked up with startled faces that swiftly whitened to see high bows breaking through the waves of vapour.

There followed much shouting, confusion and swift action, but they moved through it all, those two, as though they had been stunned.

They did not speak again until they found themselves side by side in a tossing boat that bore them towards safety.

"What are we to do now?" Clare whispered. "What are we to do?"

The man gave a queer, hoarse, little laugh.

"Oh, forget about it all, I suppose!" he said.

And that is what they did.

SPRING NOTES IN THE JURA.

WHEN I left the Jura a few weeks ago snow still held the ridges, and the spears of her white scouts shook before the gateways of all the higher valleys; the woods were dead; lumps of ice clattered in the streams, and winds were merciless and keen.

But, now that I am back again in the little village that no map knows, I find a curious thing has come to pass, for a great Personage has suddenly arrived, yet no room been found for her in the towns. Geneva, noisy and busy, knew her not; Neuchâtel, picturesque and stately, was bored; and Pontarlier—well, Pontarlier, the little mountain town where the absinthe comes from—was so high and frosty that she heard about it too late and shrugged her bleak shoulders across the miles of peak and plateau

to her high sister-town, La Chaux de Fonds—as usual. The result has been—so they tell me—that the entire mountain range has "put up" as best it can the suddenly arrived Personage and her suite. At once, all through these sombre forests the electric message ran, and a flush of soft delight dropped everywhere upon the great network of wooded valleys and hills. Having agreed to take her in, the Range instantly gave up its pretence of playing at being Alps and sent out its great sigh of pleasure, which melted all its million perfumes into one and merged the cries of water, wind and echo into a single word of welcome. The peasants, ever subtly in league with the spirit of the mountains, knew that perfume and heard that word instantly; and now all the châteaux in the upper valleys, closed these six months, are opening doors and windows to the sun and wind, sending fragrant peat smoke in blue columns to the sky and, like gigantic beehives, becoming centres of busy teeming life. The cows are on the move again. . . . Old Père Langel is sharpening his ancient scythe. . . .

For this great Guest of the Mountains stays but a short time, and preparations for her proper reception are of necessity rapid and concentrated. Suddenly, one morning when the Sun melts the low-lying mist upon the pastures, she is gone, and though her footsteps lie on all sides, radiantly coloured, there is no indication of the direction she has taken, although the fresh sweetness of her presence still lingers in the air. How she came so swiftly, too, none pretend to explain; for some say she stepped across the Lake of Neuchâtel from the south when the mist lay so close that no track upon the surface of the water was visible, while others claimed that she slipped stealthily at night down one of the secret valleys that run so tenderly into France. It is probable, though, that she landed directly from the sky itself, when the South Wind brought softness for the first time and "all the pathways of the birds were thick with rain." For the clouds that let her through changed in a day, turning their faces towards the earth instead of skywards, and dropping shadows of incredible softness to weave a carpet for her feet. But, whatever the method of her approach, the magic of her presence is felt universally, for everywhere flowers have put their little faces up to wonder and to ask, and the wind is so busy tearing to and fro to carry question and reply that the countless insects, come out to see what all the fuss is about, have threatened to retire again, as they dislike being roughly blown about before their wings are stronger. Their pretence, however, only fills the air with laughter, for when *She* comes, no one objects to a little bit of wild dancing. . . . The curiosity is intense, too. Even the Snow came back to see if it were really true (an excuse she often gives!) and then fled away, convinced, into the caverns of moisture, where she hides invisible until her own mountain apartments are ready for her again.

"Who is it calls?" asked the Wind Flowers.

"Someone with a thousand feet like the rain," laughed the breeze in a whisper among the tree tops.

"And with ten million eyes," added voices soft as perfumes from the thick carpet of moss.

The Anemones opened their starry eyes absurdly wide and stared all about them, and everywhere else, too, eyes opened, eyes with colour dipped in dew and running over—the myriad eyes with which this cloaked and hooded Jura smiles at Spring. It was the old and heavy-shouldered trees that let out the truth. They nodded solemnly to one another over the heads of the rest, and in their deep and hidden hearts they sighed the secret out. For the Sun streamed on their soaked bark and they loved it, and could no longer keep it to themselves. . . . Then the gay young beeches that sprinkle these pine woods hurriedly drew on their brilliant lacework of moist green, sifting the blue sky downwards by some magic of their own into the depths of shadow below; and soon afterwards the poplars in the fields beyond the vineyards, catching sight of them, arranged their most delicate underskirts and passed on the rustling sound of woodland frou-frou to the reeds that fringe the lake itself. Word flew thus across the water to the further shore. Among those nurseries that flank the larger woods the scattered silver birches, quick as light, were dressed and ready. "Here we are!" they sang as plainly as children anxious to be noticed. "Here we are, all spick and span"—and not unlike overgrown flowers who are afraid they may not be asked to dance. . . .

But it is the Jura flowers that most prodigally proclaim the change; they swarm and shimmer in crowds right up to the very summits of the range where the snow still hides in crannies on the northern slopes, and where the jonquils on the Tête de Rang gleam before the crocuses are gone. Everywhere the air is crystal.

In the heart of the woods only the hollies remain sulky. . . . "Are we not always terrible?" . . . Then why change?" And the army of upstanding periwinkles that nod about their roots look up in wonder and open their blue eyes even wider than the Wind Flowers. For in the Jura the spring is neither

flaming nor showy, but simple, fender, swift and exquisitely modest. The lilies of the valley have already pushed their spearlike leaves above the surface of the ground. They

have caught two murmurs: the footsteps of Someone leaving, and the deep, soft sound of Summer that is even now coming. . . .
ALGERNON BLACKWOOD.

SWINE HUSBANDRY.

NO department of agriculture has attracted so much attention of late as that of swine husbandry. A universal scarcity in pigs has occurred, not only in the United Kingdom, but in many other countries throughout the world, and it is to the farmers' interest at the present moment to devote considerable attention to pigs as a source of revenue. It is satisfactory, too, to learn that, according to the latest agricultural returns (published October 7th), the number of breeding sows has increased in Great Britain by nearly fifteen thousand. As a set-off against this, however, there is a general decrease of forty-six thousand in the stock of pigs in Great Britain, which shows that the deficiency is far from being made up. In Ireland, again, there is a total increase of fifty-one thousand, so that on the whole it may be said that there is a movement towards replenishing the pig population in different countries.

The latest returns, giving the imports of pig products made up to October 1st, show that there is a deficiency of one million one hundred thousand hundred-weights as compared with the same period last year, and this

indicates that our sources of supply still continue to shrink. The only inference to be drawn from these figures is that the time has come for British farmers to develop pig-breeding on a large scale.

The breeds of pigs which are specialised in the United Kingdom to any extent are six in number, namely, the large white Yorkshire, the middle white Yorkshire, the Tamworth, the Berkshire, the large black pig, the Lincolnshire curly-coated pig, and all of these have distinct characteristics, which are being accentuated by the different breed societies. The one factor, however, which governs them all is found in the bacon-curers' requirements. Bacon-curers are not partial to any particular breed. What they require is an animal which has the minimum of bone and the maximum of flesh, and they are prepared to pay the highest price for such an animal if it has a rectangular conformation and weighs about twelve stones (of fourteen pounds) dead weight, this being equal to sixteen stones in the live pig. Breeding to this type, therefore, should be the principal pursuit of pig-breeders.

The Large Yorkshire.—The large Yorkshire pig is in very great demand in all countries as a bacon type,



FEEDING BUT NOT FATTENING.

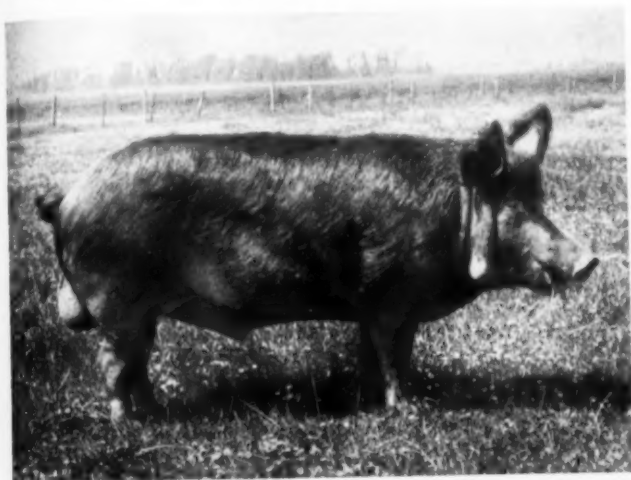


A BUSINESS SYSTEM OF STIES.



RUNNING IN THE OPEN.

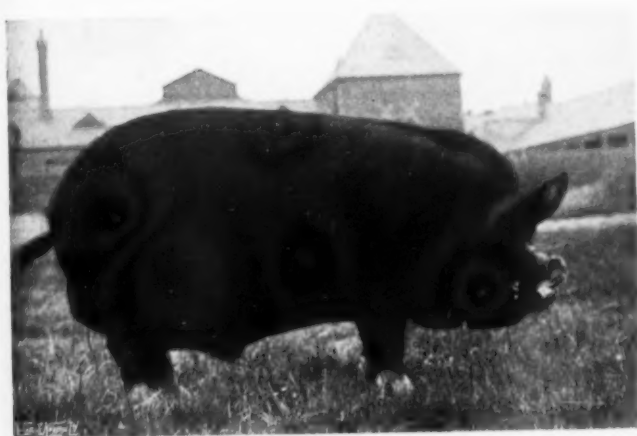
owing to the fact that it is a rapid feeder and produces those large flat sides of bacon which are so much desired for "Wiltshire cut." The present type of pig has been developed from one which was very narrow in the body and coarse in the bone. Originally it was a bad feeder, and it is due to the efforts of Bakewell that this particular breed has been developed to its present conformation. Bakewell began his experiments about 1760, and from then until now the



A TAMWORTH FOR STREAKY BACON.



A HIGHLY-DEVELOPED TAMWORTH.



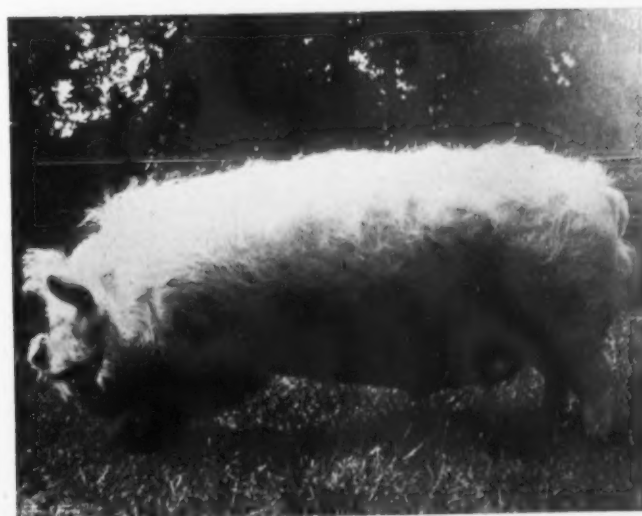
THE BERKSHIRE TYPE.



A LARGE BLACK BOAR.



A RUGGED YORKSHIREMAN.



A TYPICAL LARGE YORKSHIRE BOAR.

breed has spread pretty well over all bacon-curing countries, more especially in Europe.

The Middle White Yorkshire.—The middle white Yorkshire is a type not unlike the large white, but for the purposes of bacon it is not so profitable. It is somewhat of the same conformation, but is particularly desired because of its usefulness for producing hams, such as are cured so largely in Ireland for export.

The Tamworth.—The Tamworth pig is not one which is usually bred for itself. It is of a reddish colour and has a particularly long-shaped body. The Tamworth originally came from Ireland, from which country it was brought by Sir Robert Peel in 1715. It is principally used for crossing purposes, and provides that streaky bacon which is so much in demand, more especially in the Midlands of England. The mixture of the Tamworth and Berkshire blood is a very

common one, and is one which commends itself to many large bacon-curers.

The Berkshire.—In the South of England the black Berkshire pig is very well known, and in the county of Wiltshire, although many pigs are grown there, it is extensively used for bacon-curing purposes. The black Berkshire pigs are to be found all over the South-West of England, as well as the crossed type of Tamworth and Berkshire. The conformation of this

breed presents that of the short-faced pig, the limbs being extremely small in proportion to the body; it is, therefore, looked upon as being the best pig from the point of view of smallness of bone to the amount of flesh present.

The Sussex Pig.—In recent years a considerable amount of attention has been given to the large black Sussex pig, and its advocates insist that for bacon-curing it is by far the best of all the breeds, owing to its being a rapid feeder and maturing early. Whether these statements are correct or not it is difficult to say without a long series of experiments; but a casual study of this particular breed of pig as compared with the other breeds would seem to show that it has possibilities of development which might put it in the front rank for bacon-curing purposes.

The Lincolnshire Curly-coated Pig.—The Lincolnshire breed of pigs has only come into notice within the last few years. In fact, the first time this breed was exhibited at any of our great shows was at Smithfield in 1908, and since then much attention has been given to this particular type. It is a rapid feeder, matures early, and, it is claimed, has a higher daily average gain than any other breed. The conformation of the pig is certainly such as to make it a useful one for bacon-curing purposes.

The foregoing references are to the principal breeds of pigs in the United Kingdom. There are others besides these in different parts of the country—for example, the spotted Gloucester pig, the Ulster pig, and others; but the fact that the principal breeds mentioned in detail are those which are specialised by large associations is an indication that they are considered generally to be the most profitable types. Each association has drafted an elaborate series of points applied to each breed, and at



PASTIME WITH GOOD COMPANY.

all the various shows where pigs are exhibited they must be judged according to these points of excellence.

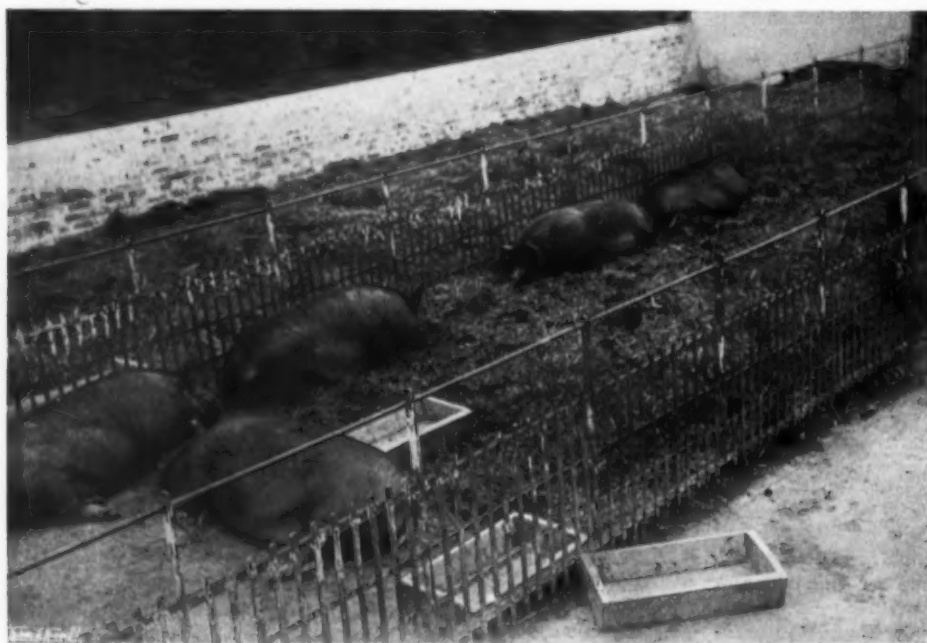
The feeding of pigs of all kinds is practically uniform, there being very little difference between the various types. One set of conditions would apply to all the different breeds, and any variation which might take place in the feed would be attributable to locality more than to anything else. The profits to be derived from pig-feeding are very great, more especially with care, and it may be stated that the cost of a year's food for a breeding sow will not amount to more than six pounds, allowing for three months grazing in summer and a plentiful supply of roots and vegetables in winter. The progeny of such an animal will be two litters of at least seven or eight pigs each, which, at the present moment, are worth at least twenty shillings each when eight weeks old, and up to which period they have cost a trifling sum to rear. The cost of the feeding of the sow, therefore, if compared with the price derivable from the sale of the young pigs, would leave a balance in hand of about ten pounds, from which have to be deducted charges for attention, administration, rent, etc. It is, therefore, quite obvious that at the present price there is a very large margin of profit, which can be increased in the aggregate by multiplying the number of breeding animals kept on a farm; it is clear that the cost of attention will be reduced as the number of the herd is increased.

There are many ways of feeding pigs; but, generally speaking, it may be set down that the ideal feed is a mixture of separated milk, potatoes and barley meal or a similar cereal, and an allowance of one gallon of separated milk, three pounds of potatoes and four pounds of barley meal per day will, on the average, make a profitable and satisfactory ration; but such a ration should not be given in the early months of a pig's existence. Up to four months, any way, young pigs should be allowed to graze, if possible, after which it would be desirable to put them in the sties for fattening, at which time warm food should be given three times a day, and warm food and warm surroundings are the conditions under which fattening pigs will grow best.

LOUDON M. DOUGLAS.



THE YORKSHIRE HEAD.



ROOM IN THE COURTYARD.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

A YOUNG STAG'S FATE.

A FEW days ago, while on the banks of the river Dee, we were amazed to see a young stag up to its neck in mid-stream and seemingly betraying no interest in our approach. The water at this point was running with tremendous force, and the river was rising fast, consequent on the melting of the snows on the hills. It seemed a most remarkable thing that the stag should have chosen to have such a lengthy bath in the ice-cold water; but nearer inspection showed that the unfortunate animal had one of its hind legs firmly fixed in a crevice of a rock, and was quite unable to move. The force of the current was such that the poor beast had been washed round till its head pointed down stream, and although it tried again and again to force itself against the stream, it was invariably swept back. If the current had not been so fierce it could, in all probability, have released its imprisoned leg by putting on the strain from a different quarter; but it looked pathetic in the extreme as it awaited certain death. The head-stalker, who lived near the scene of the accident, was hurriedly summoned to shoot the unfortunate animal; but before his arrival the stag had lost its footing and had met its fate.

A BLIND STAG.

A stalker told me a few days ago a somewhat pathetic story of an old stag. He was out hind-stalking one day and noticed a certain stag at the edge of a wood which quite ignored his presence. He had approached to within a few yards and was beginning to think a friend had played him a trick and had set up a dead stag, when he noticed that the only eye of the animal which he could see was quite useless. The stag was standing broadside on to him, and he stated that he was actually peering round the animal's head to see if the other eye was blind also, when the stag gave an immense leap and bounded away over the hillside. Besides being blind in one eye, the unfortunate animal must have been stone deaf, for as he approached the stalker shouted loudly at intervals, without the least effect. At the present date of writing (April 20th) many of the stags have shed their horns, and in some instances the new ones are already quite conspicuous. The open winter has, of course, greatly favoured them, for November furnished the only severe storm of the winter, and already we have had some days of summer heat, with the thermometer standing at 67deg. in the shade.

SPARROW-HAWK AND MAGPIE.

I was witness lately of a most interesting combat between a sparrow-hawk and a magpie. The scene of the battle was far up a Highland glen, and my attention was first drawn to the fact that something unusual was happening by a terrific noise proceeding from some ancient pine trees fringing the burn. Soon I saw a highly-excited magpie being hotly pursued in and out of the trees by a sparrow-hawk; but the latter bird did not seem to have any great anxiety to come to close quarters with the fugitive. It almost seemed as though the birds were treating the whole affair as a joke, for ultimately the magpie flew silently away without any interference on the part of the hawk.

THE HOODIE AS AN EGG-STEALER.

A certain pair of eagles have this year deserted their former eyrie—which was comparatively famous—and have constructed a new one in a different part of the forest. Now this eyrie, so far as I am aware, is quite unknown, as I gave myself the credit for its discovery; but on visiting the nest a few days ago I was surprised to find that one of the eggs had vanished. Of course, it may quite possibly have disappeared by human agency; but the locality is infested with hoodies, and I have repeatedly seen them robbing the eagles, so it is quite possible that one of these grey crows visited the eyrie during the absence of the mother eagle and carried off one of the eggs. This supposition is strengthened by the fact that only recently a stalker discovered in a hoodie's old nest a curious egg-shell, which I examined shortly afterwards. The egg certainly bore a great resemblance to an eagle's, though possibly it might have belonged to a turkey; but as the nearest turkey must have been many miles away, and several pairs of eagles nested in the vicinity, the egg had probably been stolen from one of the eyries.

CONCERNING THE GOLDEN EAGLE.

Though the eagle is the shyest of birds as a general rule, I have been witness of one or two curious incidents lately which seem to point to the fact that the king of birds is quite indifferent to the human voice even at the shortest range. A pair of eagles have their nest every year on some rocks on a steep hillside, but the same eyrie is not always used, the birds having three or four within a few yards of each other. Last season the lowest eyrie was tenanted, but this season the eagles have repaired a nest higher up the rock. I first visited the lower eyrie, and from it could see that the nest above had been repaired; but owing to the elevation it was quite impossible to see whether the eagle was brooding. A vigorous and sustained shouting and clapping of hands was without the least effect, so I climbed to the hilltop and descended right on to the eyrie. When a few yards above it I had my first sight of the eagle. She was sitting, curiously enough, with her head down wind, and one of her wings was hanging right out over the edge of the eyrie. From the colour of the plumage, which was somewhat the worse for wear, the bird must have been of a considerable age, and from her position on the nest it almost looked as though she had died while sitting. This belief was strengthened by the fact that even at this extremely short range my shouting had not the least effect, and it was not until a large stone bounded over the rock perilously near her that she threw herself over the

cliff and soared to an immense height in the teeth of the gale. It might be said that in this instance the bird was deaf; but in another case the eagle behaved in a precisely similar fashion. The eyrie was placed in an ancient pine tree, and if the eagle saw the intruder she would leave her nest while he was yet some distance away; but, provided the foot of the tree was reached without her suspicions being aroused, all the shouting in the world failed to dislodge her from her nest.

HABITS OF THE PTARMIGAN.

The ptarmigan is in many ways a bird of exceptional interest, and not the least interesting point about this hardy dweller of the mountains is its rigorous adherence to an invisible line below which it very rarely passes. This line varies to a certain, though small, extent, according to the elevation of the hilltop; for instance, the ptarmigan on a hill whose summit is only three thousand feet above sea-level are met with from the two thousand five hundred feet line and onwards, but on the higher mountains which are four thousand feet or more in height the birds are seldom, if ever, found below the three thousand feet level. This disinclination of the birds to descend to the lower levels is all the more curious because, in many instances, the feeding is exactly the same at the lower levels. As a general rule, the ptarmigan avoid ground which is wholly given over to heather, and prefer ground where the blackberry grows abundantly. I remember once visiting a mountain where this plant grew abundantly on the upper slopes. Then came a huge area given over to grass and heather, and, just under two thousand feet above sea-level, a small stretch of ground covered with blackberry plants. I was very much surprised to see a pair of ptarmigan take wing from this latter stretch, though it was considerably below their normal level. It is probable that the birds were thinking of nesting, for the season was mid-May; but the fact of their being at this low level showed, I think, their partiality for the blackberry. It has been proved by scientific observers that the heart and arteries of the ptarmigan are especially adapted for the atmospheric pressure under which they live, and it would be of some interest to discover whether the rise and fall of the barometer has any effect on their movements.

CALL-NOTES OF THE PTARMIGAN.

I was much interested in the letter from the pen of Mr. Barnby Smith which appeared in COUNTRY LIFE of February 18th. He is right, I think, in surmising that the short and sharp note of the ptarmigan is used only when the bird is alarmed, or suddenly disturbed when in a half-asleep condition. The long-drawn "clock-winding" note may be used when the birds scent danger in the distance—when they are vaguely uneasy but not really disturbed. As Mr. Barnby Smith states, it seems also to be used to express annoyance or impatience. Besides these two notes, the birds, when the nest is disturbed, utter a succession of long-drawn-out croaks as they watch, at a safe distance, the intruder near their treasures. I remember so well the behaviour of the birds when I discovered my first ptarmigan's nest a good many years ago. The cock, when flushed, practically showed me the whereabouts of the nest, for instead of flying right off he swerved suddenly above a little rocky mound on the further side of a snowfield, and it was there that I found the nest. The hen did not fly far when disturbed, but was immediately joined by the cock, whereupon a mournful croaking was kept up until I had gone some distance from the nest.

WEASEL AND MOUSE.

While motoring along a country road recently a weasel crossed our path, carrying in its mouth a mouse of considerable size. For some distance the animal attempted to run before us carrying its prey, but the burden proved too heavy for it, and it dropped the mouse—which was dead—and disappeared into a wood. The weasel seems very partial to mice, for we have seen one "working" mouse-holes in a systematic manner, going down each in turn to see, apparently, if any of the occupants were at home, and allowing us to approach to within a few yards. Occasionally stoats and weasels are found at high altitudes, and only a short time ago we were interested to see one of the former at a height of three thousand six hundred feet. The day was bright and sunny, though there was a thin coating of snow on the ground, and the stoat was running actively about among some stony ground. The marauder was evidently on the hunt for something, and as just previously we had flushed a large covey of ptarmigan, the stoat may have been attempting to scent them out. We remember finding, late one July, the headless body of a ptarmigan chick, quite warm and evidently just decapitated, and the mother bird was in a state of extreme excitement. We saw no signs of any enemy in the neighbourhood, but imagine a wandering stoat to have been the perpetrator of the crime.

CONTENTS OF AN EAGLE'S CASTING.

On a certain ledge of rock commanding an extensive outlook, a cock eagle is in the habit of perching motionless for hours on end as he scans the corrie and pass one thousand feet beneath him. A couple of castings which we examined recently contained the following interesting and widely-divergent substances: Several ptarmigan bones and claws, the practically intact bill of either a grouse or ptarmigan, a piece of the stomach of a small bird, probably a meadow-pipit or wheatear, a collection of blackberry leaves, club moss and small stones, and hundreds of ptarmigan's feathers. The most extraordinary find was the occurrence in both castings of pieces of egg-shell. It seems absurd to imagine for a moment that a golden eagle would stoop to egg-stealing, and the most probable explanation is that the ptarmigan were laying when they were captured, and that the king of birds devoured the not yet laid eggs with the other parts of the bird.

SETON GORDON.



STAG IMPRISONED IN MID-STREAM.



FEW country seats are more strikingly situated or more aptly fit their site than Farnham Castle. Its congeries of buildings, dating from the eleventh century to the present day, group admirably on the steep slope that dominates the low-lying town and looks out far and wide upon the picturesque Surrey landscape. But it is not on this account only that the great house appeals to us. For many hundreds of years it has been the home of the Bishops of Winchester—a city once the capital and always the favourite of our Sovereigns, who appointed as bishops of its well-endowed See men who were foremost in their councils. Thus not even Canterbury has a more distinguished list of prelates than Winchester, and no episcopal palace has a more interesting history than Farnham. It will be grievous indeed if the connection between the place and the bishops comes to an end. But a modern bishop is not a great lord housing himself palatially, and the "boundless roof" of the Castle has been a sore trouble to more than one recent occupant of the See. Fortunately, Bishop Thorold was in a position to spend largely upon the general repair and furnishing of the place, to the benefit of his successors. But if the proposal to divide the See should ever be carried into effect, in all likelihood the historic link will be broken. Yet the size and spread of the Castle is its only disqualification. Geographically speaking, it is as well placed for the needs of to-day as for those of old. It is in no out-of-the-way corner, for from its windows and just beyond the roofs of the town below may be seen the evanescent line of steam that

bespeaks easy transit eastward to the capital of the Empire and westward to the cathedral city. No doubt it was this position that gave Farnham such early importance as it possessed. A great estate of the Church even in the ninth century, there passed through it the track from Winchester to London, and its hillside was the site of a defensive mound encircled by a foss. This was a protection to the road, and also to the community that gradually raised an extending line of habitations on each side of the road, and thus formed the long street, which, until recent times, was practically the beginning and the end of Farnham town. With the advent of the Normans massive stone keeps began to replace the earthen palisaded bulwarks of the Saxons, and when a King's brother sat on Winchester's episcopal throne Farnham's turn came. Henry of Blois was one of our greatest twelfth century builders, and the anarchic period of his brother Stephen's reign caused such building to be of the strongest defensive character. In his wide-spreading diocese Bishop Henry erected at least half-a-dozen castles, of which that of Wolvesey, within Winchester and largely composed of the materials of the Conqueror's palace there, was one, and Farnham was another. The massive walls of his keep yet remain—anyhow to a portion of their ancient height—but the wooden buildings that lined its stone shell have long ago given way to a garden. Beneath the soaring height of the south side of the keep, through a round-arched portal, which an accompanying illustration shows, and down a steep flight of steps that still forms a most picturesque feature, Bishop Henry



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BISHOP FOX'S TOWER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE GREAT HALL.

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began the building of the more domestic portions of the Castle. They enclose a picturesque and irregular quadrangle displaying many architectural periods. Though the great hall is now essentially Palladian in appearance, its structure is still largely Norman, and one oak post of its original wooden arcading may be seen through a little doorway that opens on to the great south corridor of the Castle. In what is now the servants' hall, but was once the chapel, massive round pillars support arches transitional in character. They are slightly pointed, and most probably

of Blois, moreover, was often abroad, while Richard of Ilchester, as one of Henry II.'s leading judges, was much engaged in legal work both in London and the provinces. We have to pass to Henry III.'s time before we hear of a bishop ending his days within Farnham's walls. This was King John's friend and minister, Peter des Roches, and in his time the Castle was more than once taken and lost by the opposing factions. It is curious that a fortress to which both Nature and artifice seem to have given so much strength should never have made any considerable



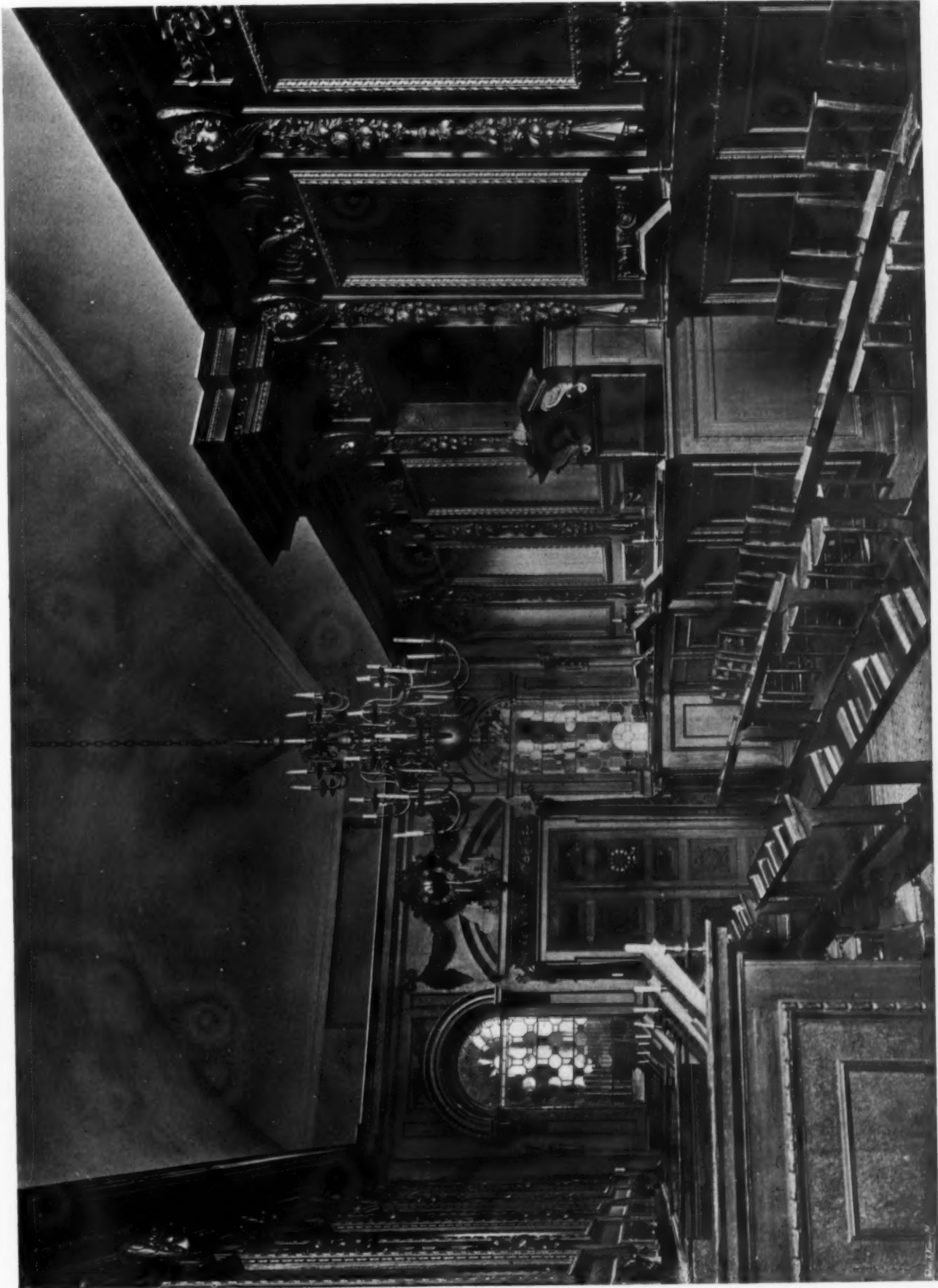
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ENTRANCE TO THE CHAPEL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

date from the time of Bishop Henry's immediate successor, Richard of Ilchester, who differed from Henry in being a lawyer rather than a warrior, but, like him, was a famous builder. If we owe to him the early Gothic work in the servants' hall, the chronicler's prophecy that his building would "recall his name from generation to generation" is amply verified. Though these two made of Farnham a place both of strength and of inhabitation, their visits there will have been few and far between. Of the numerous houses they possessed, Farnham was by no means among the most important and most favoured. Henry

defence or stood a protracted siege. Yet it did not either in mediæval or in Stewart times, although the clash of arms frequently resounded about its ramparts. It easily fell a prey to Louis and his Frenchmen at the end of John's reign, and was as easily recaptured by William Marshall soon after Henry III. succeeded his father. In the seventeenth century Royalist ejected Parliamentary and Parliamentary ejected Royalist with the same facility. If this diminishes the military importance of the Castle, it probably adds to its architectural interest by having assisted in the preservation of ancient features that



BISHOP MORLEY'S CHAPEL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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might otherwise have been swept away. Its history is essentially domestic, and in the fourteenth century there is evidence to show that the bishops began to reside there more and more. Bishop Woodlock died there nine years after he had crowned Edward II., while Adam of Orlton, who induced that monarch to resign his throne, spent there his blind old age. A resident chaplain became essential, and Bishop Edendon assigned special rents for the maintenance of a priest, who officiated, not in the chapel now illustrated, but in the one already mentioned as having occupied the site of the servants' hall. It was soon after this that the greatest of our late mediæval architect

yeoman father sent him to Oxford as a step towards a career in the Church, sided with Henry Tudor in the dark Yorkist days, and became one of his leading statesmen after the Battle of Bosworth was fought and won. As a reward for ministerial and ambassadorial work the princely See of Durham was bestowed upon him in 1494, and the hall of its castle, which he so largely altered and fitted, remains as evidence of his passage there. The King did not like him so far away, and as soon as the handier and equally wealthy See of Winchester became vacant he was translated to it. His work in the Cathedral choir shows evidence of the new Renaissance period, such as was being introduced under Henry VIII. in the limited domain of interior decoration. At Farnham he wrought in the native manner, working, as was the fashion of the day where stone was scarce, in small-sized, dark red bricks patterned with a diaper of burnt ends. Such work appears about the keep ruins, both on the outer walls and for features such as fireplaces within. We may therefore gather that Bishop Fox overhauled the whole structure. But his chief addition was the great tower that he set in front of the screen end of the hall. It was sash-windowed in Palladian times, but is otherwise almost intact. Neither Layer Marney, Oxburgh nor Hampton Court gives us a better insight into the brickwork of the time. The mouldings of its arched doorway, of its machicolations and of the corbelling of its parapet are quite excellent, and Time has dealt well with it—it is delightful in tone and texture, but has not lost its outline and detail.

With Fox began the period when our Sovereigns took a special fancy to Farnham, and were apt to visit it more frequently than quite suited the bishops' personal convenience. Henry VII. had particularly committed his son and successor to Fox's care, and King Hal ever relied on the friendship and sought the advice of the bishop. Moreover, Farnham was an admirable centre for sport. From early times it had its great and little parks and its north and south chases, while beyond these lay the forests of Woolmer and of Alice Holt. It was, therefore, both business and pleasure that brought the Sovereign to the Castle in 1516, and made him choose it as a place of retirement for himself and his Queen, when a violent outbreak of the sweating sickness filled him with terror in the following year. That it was a liking for the place as much as an attachment to a particular bishop is proved by his being again there after Gardiner became bishop, although Gardiner's suspected leaning towards the Papal supremacy made his position insecure ere Henry VIII. died, and led to his long imprisonment and the loss of his temporalities when Edward was King. All was restored to him when Catholic Mary succeeded her Protestant brother, and Farnham was the scene of important council meetings when the marriage



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THE CHAPEL DOORS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

builders became Bishop of Winchester. But though William of Wykeham not infrequently occupied Farnham and effected some repairs, he has left no particular mark of his genius upon the fabric. There is a good deal of early Gothic work, such as the kitchen, whose lancet windows look south and whose great door must once have opened behind the screen of the hall, where the delicate shafts of Purbeck marble lately brought to view speak of the thirteenth century. But from that time forward there are few Gothic features until we reach the latest phase of the style as shown in the brickwork of Henry VIII.'s time. Richard Fox, whose

of Mary with Phillip of Spain was under discussion in 1554. The Protestant historians of the next generation held up Gardiner as a stern Romanist and pitiless persecutor. Yet it would seem that, where his health and comfort were concerned, the austere Churchman could wink at lapses from the faith, even under his own roof, for Fuller tells, in his racy English: "However (as bloody as he was) for mine own part I have particular gratitude to pay to the memory of this *Stephen Gardiner*, and here I solemnly tender the same. It is on the account of *Mrs. Clerke* my great Grandmother by my mother's side, whose husband rented *Farnham Castle*, a place whither

the Bishop Gardiner retired in *Surrey*, as belonging to his Sea. This Bishop sensible of the consumptionous state of his body, and finding physick out of the kitchin more beneficiall for him than that out of the Apothecaries shop, and speciall comfort from the Cordialls she provided him; did not onely himself connive at her *Heresie*, as he termed it, but also protected her during his life from the fury of others."

Had Gardiner lived into Elizabeth's reign, he also would have needed "protection from the fury of others," and even his successors, Protestants though they were, would have welcomed protection against the rapacity of the Queen's ministers and courtiers. Many bishoprics lost considerable portions of their estates during her reign, and many bishops had to satisfy the demands of important people by money payments or the grant of cheap leases before they were appointed. The Queen, too, expected a good deal of her leading Churchmen in the way of hospitality. She liked Farnham, as her father had done, and more than once she required to be expensively entertained by the impoverished prelates, one of whom appears to have turned out into a small house in the town while she occupied the Castle. Moreover, she was apt to allow long vacancies profitable to herself, during which time the constable and keeper of the Castle took the first place. These posts, in her reign, were generally held by the Mores of Loseley, near Guildford, who were then coming forward in the world and building the fine house that has survived. Thus we find Sir William More selling a Farnham hay crop in 1579 during a vacancy, but instructed by Lord Burghley in the next year to keep it "for the convenience" of the new bishop, who, no doubt, was made to pay a full price for it. Thus the story of the Castle during this reign is one of deterioration, and towards the end of her reign Bishop Bilson complains "that some of the towers of Farnham Castle are already fallen and if they be not shortly repaired they will endanger the whole house." He must have found means to make the place safe, for he entertained there both Elizabeth and James I. The latter liked the house so much as a hunting centre that he took it on lease for the bishop's lifetime, and was also the guest of Bilson's successor, Bishop Andrewes, who effected repairs at "a great charge" and spent one thousand pounds on his three days' entertainment of the Sovereign. Charles I. also made use of the bishop's house for the purposes of the chase, and as he took a great number of his courtiers with him, we hear that "their tents were set up like Tartars and they hunted before and after noon like Indians as if they should dine and sup on nothing but what they killed."

A few years more and men were no longer in pursuit of deer, but of each other. In 1642 George Wither, the poet, was appointed by Parliament Commander of Farnham Castle, with such troops as Sir Richard Onslow, their Chief Representative in *Surrey*, would allow him. He vamped up the defences, which, he declared, had only been inhabited by daws and crows, and he patched up the stables that had been burnt down during James I.'s tenancy. But he found that Onslow did not support



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BISHOP MORLEY'S STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

him, and while he went to complain to Parliament a rival poet, Sir John Denham, occupied the place for the King. It must have been very weak, for Sir William Waller had only to fire a petard against the gatehouse to gain admission. He held it for the Parliament, but used it merely as a depôt for troops and stores. Later on it was dismantled and the whole place was ruinous, when it once more became Church property at the Restoration in 1660. Two years after that George Morley was translated from the Worcester to the Winchester See. He had been hated by Laud for his Calvinistic leanings; but in politics he was a strong Royalist, and he suffered accordingly under the Commonwealth. Deprived of all preferment, he retired to live with his brother-in-law, Izaak Walton, in Staffordshire. Afterwards, when Farnham was the bishop's favourite home, Walton spent much time in the Castle, and thence dated the fifth edition of the "Compleat Angler." But before a special lodging was assigned to him, Morley had done great works of reparation, for Anthony Wood tells us: "He spent £8,000 in repairing the Castle at Farnham before the year 1672." The date is important, as Morley's woodwork has sometimes been wrongly attributed to Grinling Gibbons, although his delicate touch is entirely lacking. In 1672 Gibbons had only just been discovered by John Evelyn, and thus we get chronological evidence that he had no part in the Farnham Castle renovations. It should be noticed that Sir John Denham, whom we have seen holding Farnham for the King in 1642.



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CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE GREAT HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE GALLERY STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

was rewarded at the Restoration by receiving the appointment of Surveyor of the Royal Works. The post had been vacant since Inigo Jones's death, and was expected by his kinsman, John Webb. But the professional architect had to give way to the poet warrior and act as his assistant. Now, Denham was related to Bishop Morley, and it is probable that he was called in and that Webb was responsible for some of the

The rest of the "drops," cherubims and palm branches are carved in pine-wood and set upon the oak wainscoting in the manner that then became usual and was adopted by Gibbons himself, who, however, wrought his elaborate work in lime-wood rather than in pine.

The Farnham chapel's most interesting feature is, perhaps, the carving of the double doors through the screen, and a detail



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STAIRWAY TO THE KEEP.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

designing. In any case, the great chimney-piece in the hall and the whole of the chapel fittings are very similar to what he had introduced at Wilton, Forde and Thorpe under the guidance of Inigo Jones. It is also interesting to note that all of the "drops" and other ornamental work in the chapel are not in wood, part of them being, as Sir Henry Tanner tells us, "executed in a species of 'compo' like some of Jones's work at Wilton." This only applies to the work at the east end.

illustration of them is given. Each of the panels represents a winged cherub's head or a sun's face in a laurel wreath, the work being perforated, as in the case of the then fashionable panels for altar rails and staircase balustrades. Such, however, were not introduced at Farnham, where Morley's fine staircase has turned balusters of great substance, and no carving appears except for the vases with fruit that form the terminals of the newel-posts. The staircase itself, and also the great pedimented doorways

that are on it, are again quite like Webb's work—good in design, racy in execution, but coarse and heavy compared to the similar work that shortly followed, and was executed either by Grinling Gibbons and his pupils or by independent carvers under his influence. This is especially true of the great mantel-piece in the hall, which is a most curious example of Palladian ornament executed in the Gothic spirit. The mantel-piece is sixteen

feet across, and the whole of the frieze and cornice is hewn, moulded and carved out of one great solid baulk of oak of the size and character of the beam of a mediæval fire-arch. Nor was any attempt made to cut a smooth background to the carving of the swags, for its texture shows it to have been merely roughly chipped away with adze or with hammer and



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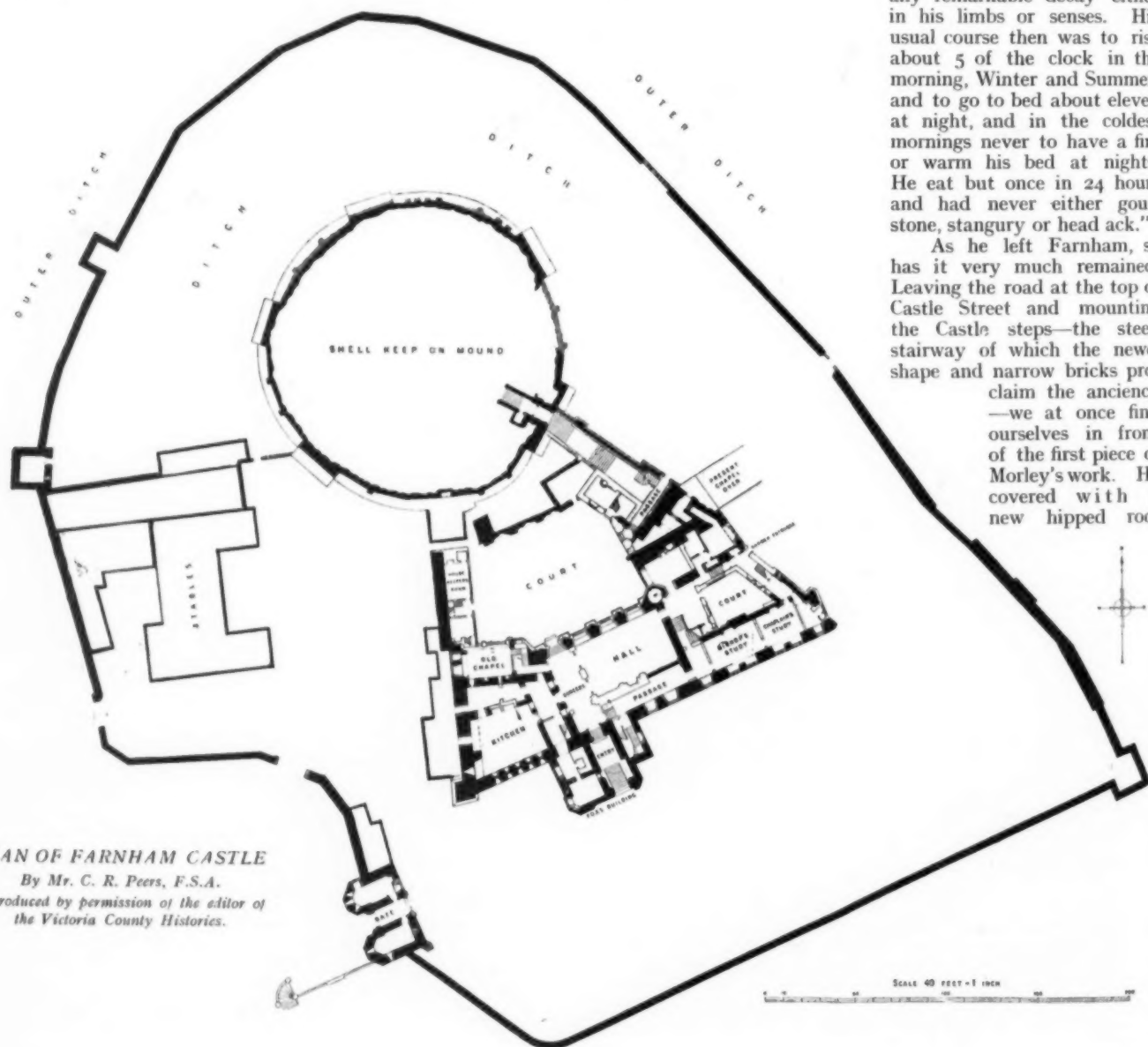
THE RUINED KEEP.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the visitor was his King or his humblest clergy. But his habits were austere and saint-like, for his own chamber was a little eight-foot-square room that formed the basement of the entrance tower, and his contemporary, Anthony Wood, thus describes his life at the time when he was completing his repairs at Farnham: "In the 74th yr of his age he was without

any remarkable decay either in his limbs or senses. His usual course then was to rise about 5 of the clock in the morning, Winter and Summer, and to go to bed about eleven at night, and in the coldest mornings never to have a fire or warm his bed at nights. He eat but once in 24 hours and had never either gout, stone, stangury or head ack."

As he left Farnham, so has it very much remained. Leaving the road at the top of Castle Street and mounting the Castle steps—the steep stairway of which the newel shape and narrow bricks proclaim the ancience—we at once find ourselves in front of the first piece of Morley's work. He covered with a new hipped roof



PLAN OF FARNHAM CASTLE

By Mr. C. R. Peers, F.S.A.

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of tiles what remained of the twin tower gatehouse; and the gate that Waller had blown in with his petard he replaced with one flanked with wooden pilasters, which, as the illustration shows, he enriched with drops of ribboned fruit similar to those in his chapel. Passing through we find ourselves on the broad terraced space that looks out south over the town and has Fox's tower as its chief northern feature. This, no doubt, Morley re-windowed, for though the sashes to the front are of somewhat later date, there are on the side examples of the wooden casements that were then common, and that he himself used in his rebuilding of Wolvesey Palace, in Winchester. He, too, may have set up the sundials on the tower, but otherwise he left it much alone, as he likewise did the office buildings that lie to the west, and where the kitchen retains its twelfth century lancet windows and its fire-arch nineteen feet across. The great hall he completely remodelled. He reduced its length, ceiled it and put in windows and woodwork of his day. The picture of its east end shows all this, and also the pillared gallery which looks down into the hall from the top of Morley's staircase. All this is on the south side of the quadrangle, the east side being principally occupied by Morley's chapel and by the great drawing-room, which has been more than once redecorated since his time, and whose walls are now adorned with portraits of the post-Restoration bishops in their Garter robes.

Neither Bishop Morley nor any of his successors attempted repairs to the keep. Its area was soon used for horticultural purposes; at first for fruit and vegetable growing, but now it has become a flowery parterre well laid out with circular and diagonal paths. Succeeding bishops and their ladies have added touches to the picturesque gardens that occupy the ample space between the Castle and its outer ramparts. Well-grown examples of Liquidambar and of Berberis Knightii must be recent introductions, but the splendid cedars that group so well with Fox's tower were grown from seed which an eighteenth century bishop's wife is said to have brought herself from Mount Lebanon. Brownlow North was brother to the Prime Minister who helped George III. to lose the American Colonies, and who gave his relative the rich See of Winchester in the very year that the Yorktown surrender made the independence of the colonists inevitable.

The bishop's lady is described as "very fashionable," and no doubt did much in the way of decoration and upholstery to make the Castle like herself. We may think little of her interior changes, but her cedars are as valuable an addition as the avenue in the park which the bishop replanted. The Norths were a social and popular couple, but are best known to history through having pushed members of their family into all the good things of the Winchester diocese. It was one of their sons whose malversations at St. Cross led to a judicial enquiry in 1856. Men of greater distinction followed Bishop North at Farnham. And now the confirmation of the election of Dr. Talbot, Bishop of Southwark, as Bishop of Winchester has just taken place in Bow Church, Cheapside. He is the latest, but by no means the least distinguished successor to Bishop Morley.

T.

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

MILK RECORDS.

THE number of dairy-farmers and breeders of dairy cattle who keep records of the milk yields of their cows increases steadily every year. The principal reasons why such records are of practical value to agriculturists are: (1) Unprofitable milch cows are easily detected and can be weeded out of the herd. (2) They prove which cows in the herd yield the most milk per annum and enable breeders to select only the progeny of deep milking dams to retain for breeding purposes. (3) The value of different food rations for producing milk can be more readily ascertained. (4) They act as a chart of health, as a very slight indisposition or illness causes a falling off in the daily milk yield of a cow. Some farmers think that measuring milk for record purposes is a sufficient guide, but weighing it is just as easy and is certainly more accurate. Those who wish to be exact in their figures weigh the milk given by each individual cow every morning and night during the whole period of lactation. Once a week they add up the weekly yields of all the cows in the herd and check the total result by comparing it with the amount of milk which was sold, used in the dairy, consumed by calves or otherwise disposed of during that week. When such a system is considered too troublesome, the milk drawn from each cow is weighed and entered on the milk sheet only on one day in every week or fortnight, and the amount thus given is multiplied by seven or fourteen, as the case may be, the result being taken to represent the weekly or fortnightly yield of the cow. By the latter method a very fair idea of each animal's annual production of milk can be arrived at, and it answers the purpose when this information is required for the owner's private use.

It is becoming customary nowadays, however, for purchasers of pedigree dairy stock to be furnished with milk records of cows, and in the case of heifers or bulls with the records of their female ancestry. When the seller supplies the buyer with this information, it is essential that the former should keep his records with great accuracy if he wishes to inspire his customers with confidence in his figures. However particular one is about the correctness of one's statistics it is not safe to guarantee that a cow will give a definite quantity of milk per annum or during any stated period, but only that she has done so. It does not necessarily follow that if A sells B a cow with a genuine record of say eight thousand pounds of milk per annum, that this cow will give eight thousand pounds of milk during the first or even during any subsequent year that she is in B's possession. It is possible to buy a pump that is guaranteed to throw a certain number of gallons of water per hour, but a cow's annual milk yield cannot be guaranteed, as she, unlike a pump, is a sensitive living creature. Thus a change of climate, or diet, or many other reasons, may account for cows producing less milk than they have been accustomed to do when transferred to new homes.

Some persons calculate the yields of their cows from the date the cows calve until the date they "go dry," while others ascertain the amount of milk their cows give per annum. When one hears a cow spoken of as, for example, "a thousand gallon cow," it is always wise to enquire whether she gave this quantity of milk during one period of lactation, which is an indefinite time, or during twelve months. I prefer calculating cows' milk returns by the year, and recommend starting records on the first day of the farming year and ending them on the last. Generally speaking, this means they start and finish at Michaelmas or at Lady Day. The most valuable cow in a herd to a breeder of dairy stock is, I take it, the one which produces a live calf every year and which averages the greatest weight of milk per annum for five or six years, although she may never have had an extraordinary record for any one year.

When comparing the yearly record of one cow against another, it is necessary to take into consideration not only the date on which each cow calved, but also the date when each was due to calve again. Otherwise a cow that does not breed regularly often has, on paper, an advantage as a record-maker over one that is very prolific, for the following reason. Soon after a cow becomes pregnant her milk-yield begins to diminish, and it becomes less and less as the fœtus requires more and more nourishment. About six or eight weeks before the calf is born the flow of milk generally ceases entirely. A cow which will not, or which is not allowed to, breed again until a long time after she calves, will generally keep up a steady flow of milk for a lengthy period, sometimes even for eighteen months or more. Thus, even when records are calculated by the year, and more so when they are reckoned from calving to calving, a cow may be credited with an extraordinarily fine record for either of these periods, mainly because she remained barren for many months. I understand, on good authority, that some of the wonderful milk records one hears of in the United States of America are obtained by not allowing the cow which is to be specially tested for a record to be mated with a bull for twelve months after calving, during which time this "test" cow is crammed with food-stuffs that stimulate the production of milk. This treatment of cows as mere milking machines to be run at full speed, is not to be recommended where valuable dairy cattle are kept, as it tends to injure their constitutions and to ruin them for breeding purposes. Up to the present I do not think it is practised to any great extent, if at all, among English herds; but I foresee a danger of it spreading if purchasers are prepared to pay very high prices for cows simply and solely because they have scored "a highest possible" milk record.

W.

TWO TYPICAL SHORTHORN SALES.

At the time of writing one of the sales alluded to is a thing of the past, and the other takes place before these notes can appear. The two events are of the greatest interest to all who are at all acquainted with the technicalities of shorthorn breeding, for they are representative of two distinct schools of the art. The herd collected and bred by the late Lord Calthorpe was dispersed by Messrs. Jno. Thornton and Co. on Tuesday last, and the prices realised produced the highest average for many years. Twenty-five females, some of them with calves at foot, averaged, in round figures, £163 per head, the highest prices being 350 guineas for Elvetham Nonpareil II., 330 guineas for Elvetham Clipper III. and 310 guineas for Elvetham Lavender Thyme. We need not go into further details here, as these facts are sufficient for the purpose of the moment, which is to make clear to the general reader the reason for these exceptional figures. The Elvetham herd represented the shorthorn fashion of the day, being chiefly composed of those Scotch tribes founded at Sittyton by Mr. Amos Cruickshank. Among these the most highly-esteemed are the Augusta, Lavender, Clipper, Nonpareil, Broadhooks and Butterfly families, all of which were represented in the Elvetham catalogue except the first-named. The females of all these "tribes" are eagerly coveted not only in Britain, but in the United States and Argentina, not so much for their intrinsic merit (though from the beef point of view that is very great) as for the mere fact that they stand on the pedestal of fashion, just in the same way as once did the leading families of the Bates and Booth groups. They are essentially of the beef type, and this is frankly admitted by their admirers, and all that is asked of a Sittyton cow as a milker is that she shall be able to rear her own calf. Fully recognising that the country needs cattle of first-rate grazing quality, as well as profitable dairy animals, and being firmly persuaded that the perfection of

beef and milk production cannot possibly be combined in the same animal, I find no fault whatever with the lack of milk in the Scotch shorthorns. They have their own sphere, which is specially devoted to the requirements of the showyard and the economical production of beef. I do not even carp at the fancy for certain favoured families, for it is harmless so long as too close breeding is avoided and a robust constitution and beauty of form are maintained. The Cruickshank men must, however, beware of too much line-breeding, the results of which were so painfully manifested, towards the close of the last century, in the fashionable strains of those days. Let us now turn to the forthcoming sale of Mr. George Taylor's dairy shorthorns on Thursday next. There could scarcely be a greater contrast in the type of animals of the same race than that between the Scotch and Mr. Taylor's Bates-bred dairy herd; but I repeat that there is no room for invidious comparisons. We might almost as well attempt to compare two distinct breeds cultivated for totally different purposes. It may safely be said, however, that the objects aimed at by the dairy breeder are distinctly utilitarian, and quite free from the dangerous attractions of mere paper values. It is true that the Cranford herd is "beautifully

bred" from the choicest old Bates blood; but that arises incidentally from the fact that Mr. Taylor found in it the most suitable material to work with in the evolution of a strain of shorthorns which should not only be abundant milkers, but possess the power of transmission of that quality to their offspring with practical certainty. I see a doubt has been suggested of the possibility of the milking propensity being handed down through the sire; but no such doubt exists in the minds of men of practical experience, convinced by overwhelming evidence. The milking record of the first thirty-two lots in the Cranford catalogue forms a triumphant vindication of Mr. Taylor's methods of breeding and management, and is, I believe, quite unrivalled. These thirty-two cows yielded during their last year in milk an average of 1,003 gallons! Four of them exceeded 1,200 and nine exceeded 1,100 gallons. It is not surprising that the demand for young bulls from such a herd should be far greater than can be met. The fact is that they are bespoken before they are born. As the milk demand is rapidly overtaking the supply, shorthorn dairy breeders are doing good service by increasing individual yields and enabling dairy-farmers to enlarge their output without increasing the number of cows. A. T. M.

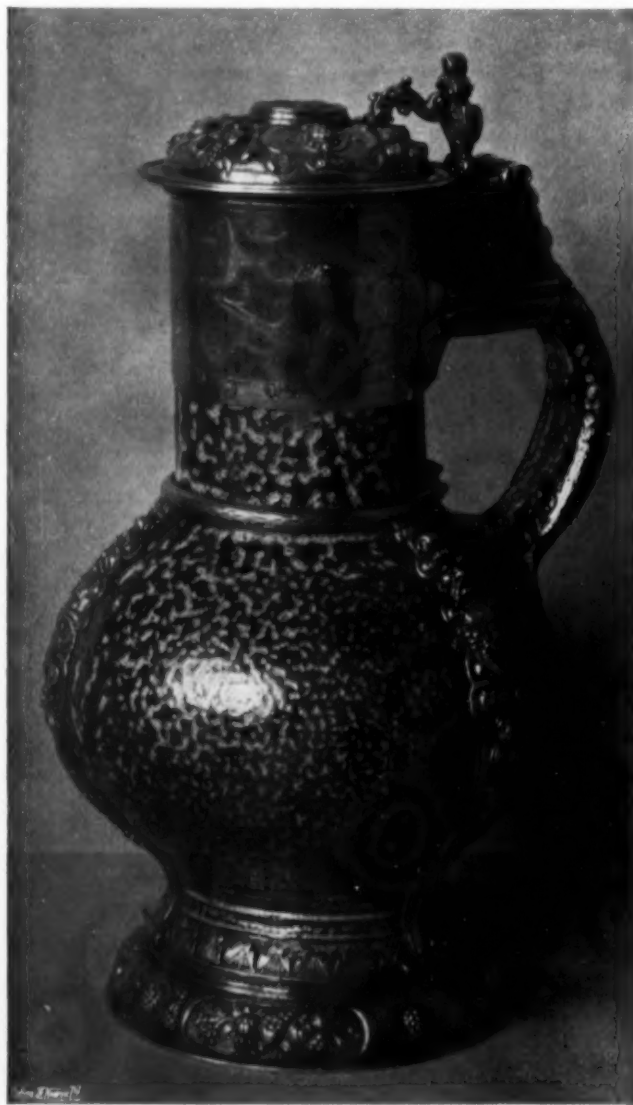
THE ENGLISH SILVER OF THE LATE COL. W. F. TIPPING.

FIFTY years ago there were but few recognised collectors of silver plate in England, although there were people of taste who from time to time acquired old specimens that appealed to their sense of beauty, and with which they relieved the opulent ugliness of the Victorian dinner-table and sideboards. The late Colonel Tipping must have continually been accustomed to look on the few fine old pieces of George III. and foreign silver belonging to his father, and these, no doubt, gave him an early appreciation for silver and created a desire to form the interesting collection which, unfortunately, he did not live long enough to complete. His plate differed somewhat in interest to the important collection of the late Lord Swaythling, as Colonel Tipping gave particular attention to acquiring a series of objects representing the evolution in well-known types, such as tankards, porringers, sugar and pepper dredgers and candlesticks; but it is impossible, for want of space, to give here any illustrations, except of isolated specimens. To this enthusiastic collector we owe the discovery of the West Malling stoneware jug, which was found by him in the Vicar's drawing-room, and by his suggestion sent up to Christie's and sold in February, 1903, under a faculty for the benefit of the church for one thousand four hundred and fifty pounds. These jugs of German ware, called in this country "tiger ware," mounted with silver covers, neckings, strappings and bases, were introduced towards the middle of the fifteenth century, and continued to be made until its close. Up till about the year 1575 the neckband is found engraved with strapwork or fine arabesques; but after this date a repoussé of lions' masks with fruit and flowers is more general. The accompanying illustration represents a specimen of remarkable excellence. The cover is decorated with a fine repoussé of lions' masks, fruits and flowers, into which is inserted a gold coin of Charles V., and is of the finest Elizabethan work; beneath this a neckband, delicately engraved, is united to the handle strap by the

usual little box, bearing the billet and hinge; this handle strap is surmounted by a warrior's mask. The jug itself is richly mottled, and much resembles a leopard's skin. The base is composed of two ovolo mouldings covered with a decoration to match the lid, intersected by a small ladder moulding, and joined to the lower neckband by three straps formed of terminal figures, modelled and cast in the bold manner of the Renaissance; the three methods of engraving, hammering and casting being here represented in a most perfect manner, the quality of workmanship and design far surpassing that found on the West

Malling jug and others of its period. The weight of silver employed—thirteen ounces—is deeply engraved underneath the base rim. The marks are: London; maker's mark, a stag's head. Examples of this are given by Cripps for 1551, 1562, 1570, 1574.

The fruit or cake basket, although seventy years later than the jug, is a far rarer example of English silver plate, for fretted dishes of this basket form are supposed to be confined to Georgian times only; but there is no doubt that many forms of early plate entirely disappeared during the Reformation and the Rebellion. The construction of this beautiful basket is quite simple, being composed of a cylindrical sheet of fretted silver work that slightly tapers to a base, which is pierced in imitation of basket-work, the piece being encircled at the rim and base with twisted cordings. The fretting is composed of a whorled strapwork interwoven with eagles' heads and connected at intervals by cherubs' heads; the heads are further emphasised by somewhat rude engraving on the flat surface, but the ingenious originality of the whole treatment is very preferable to the more artificial finish of a later period. This basket bears the hall-mark of 1641, with maker's mark, P. G. over a seeded rose, in a trefoil. It should be remembered that the plate of Charles I. belongs to the end of a great period in art, and consequently shows traces of weakness and repetition.



ELIZABETHAN TIGER WARE JUG.
9½ in. high; 1574; maker's mark, a stag's head.



A SET OF THREE CHARLES II. CASTERS, 1684.

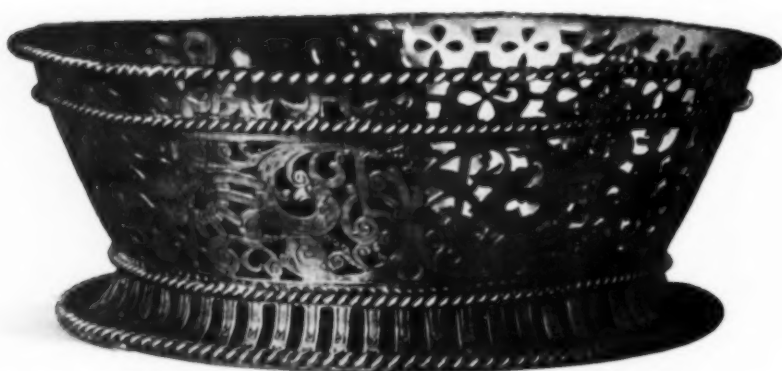
6½ in. and 4½ in. high—by Anthony Nelme.

The series of tankards that form an interesting feature in this collection commences with a "petticoat" specimen of Charles I., and clearly illustrates their evolution till the reign of George II., when the sides of the tankard became bulbous in shape with domed covers, and devoid of much interest. Another evolution represented in this well-chosen collection is that of dredgers and casters dating from a very early set of 1684 to the vase-shaped specimens of a hundred years later. The earliest silver receptacle for pepper in England is found

at the top of the bell and other standing salts made at the end of the sixteenth century, though undoubtedly some form of pepper caster must have existed in the middle of the seventeenth century, but no authentic specimens have been discovered up to this time. The interesting set shown dated 1684 are of the straight cylindrical type made from about 1680 to 1710; the flattened tops with embossed gadrooning belong to the earlier date, and the isolated perforations of the caps and bases are also most representative,



A SET OF THREE SUGAR VASES—1772.

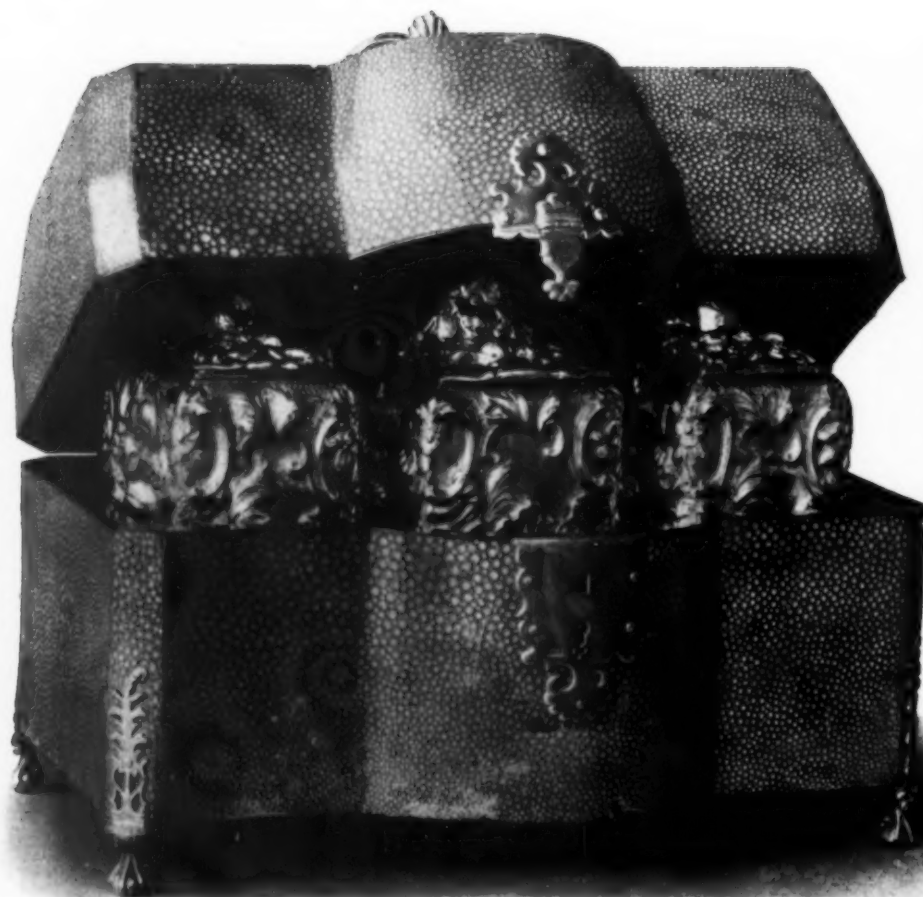


A CHARLES I. CIRCULAR BASKET.
3½ in. high, 10½ in. in diameter—1641. (Maker's mark, P. G., with a flower below.)



A GEORGE I. CIRCULAR
DISH.

8½ in. in diameter. (Isaac Liger, 1719.)



EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CADDIES IN SHAGREEN CASE.
(Probably made by Paul Crespin in 1752.)

for within a very few years these perforations are made to form a pattern, such as vases of flowers, little men with pipes, etc., connected with lines of engraving, while the bases are solid, cast and composed of a few ring mouldings framing a broad half-round of gadrooning. At the commencement of the eighteenth century the casters were made with curved sides, sometimes flattened and in octagon, then vase-shaped, and eventually, mounted on to a foot, they conformed in style, like everything else at that time, to the tyranny of Adam.

John Fawdery was a celebrated maker of chocolate and coffee pots, and his mark is frequently to be found upon these articles, which first came into use towards the end of the seventeenth century. One of his chocolate-pots, dated 1704, is illustrated. It is plain except where the spout and handle join the body of the pot, where finely-designed card-cutting ornamentation conveys an appearance of richness. The metal of this exceptionally fine pot is very thick, and the long hammer-markings almost form a decoration of their own upon its carefully-considered shape. The dragon spout, elaborate hinge to the lid and the upper opening for the insertion of the chocolate stick give far more character to this piece than is generally found on these objects. A very different sentiment in decoration is suggested by the beautiful dish made by Isaac Liger in 1719, where the elegance of the rising French taste is evident. The flutings that appear to form petals round the dish are more characteristic of Irish than English plate, and complete an ingenious arrangement of curves that distribute lights and shades over the surface of the metal. The Regence decoration surrounding the centre of the dish is a fine example of English chasing and engraving.

Even still more typical of the French taste that was pervading art so much in this country towards the middle of the eighteenth century, are the set of caddies illustrated, and although the brilliant green shagreen case, with its silver mountings, is more obviously English than the contents, the rococo elements of the floral knops to the covers of the caddies, the elaborate C scrolling, lion masks and paws, in combination with the pseudo-Chinese figures and pagodas at the sides, very distinctly create an impression of foreign influence, an influence, that so greatly controlled the work of Chippendale at this time. The execution of the repoussé in these caddies is

remarkable, being so high and sharp that the greatest skill and care must have been employed not to crack the metal, for in places it must have been strained to its utmost tension. They are probably the work of Paul Crespin, and bear the hall-mark of 1752. They are in most perfect preservation.

Another illustration shows a set of three sugar vases by Daniel Smith and Robert Sharp, marked 1772, and were probably designed by Robert Adam, for their proportions are perfect and their decoration so large and simple that it would seem unlikely for any ordinary silversmith of that time to have given the individual touch so peculiar to that master. It is well known that Adam not only designed the furniture and silks for his houses, but also the carpets and accessories, even to the fireirons, and many designs for plate exist at the Soane Museum, showing that he considered nothing in size too small for his attention. The decoration on these vases is cast and applied, as was the case with the medallions and strapwork found on the Anne and Early Georgian silver and most of the ornament forming the edging and excrescences to the florid plate of the eighteenth century. These few specimens, though in no way representing the infinite variety to be found in this collection, clearly denote the high standard of excellence aimed at by the late owner. PERCY MACQUOID.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE SETTING OF FRUIT.

THAT cross-pollination and bees are of great importance in the setting of fruit is shown in the following examples. At Swanley forty good-sized Pitmaston Duchess Pear trees were planted away from other Pears. For four years they flowered well, but did not yield a single fruit. The trees were therefore taken up and replanted in a small plantation with other varieties of Pears, and a hive of bees put among them. The following spring they commenced to bear fruit, and have continued to do so. The same thing happened in the case of a large Bigarreau Cherry tree, near Tonbridge. While there was a hive of bees near it bore excellent crops; but the bees died from "foul brood," and for two years there was no crop either year. But on a hive of bees being restarted, the crop again was good, when the bees died from their owner omitting to feed them in the spring, and there was in consequence no crop.

In Australia, self-sterility is noticed in many varieties of Apples, Pears, and in some varieties of Plums and Cherries, the Early Purple Guigne Cherry being an example. In England, the Black Tartarian Cherry appears to be "self-sterile"; but probably other varieties would be found to be self-sterile if information were collected and experiments tried. Of Plums in England, it seems that Rivers' Early Prolific, the old Green Gage and Black Diamond are varieties that are "self-sterile," i.e., require the pollen of other varieties of Plum in order to set fruit. While Victoria, in some cases, appears to be "self-fertile," in others it is not so.

In America, the Satsuma Plum is planted as a polliniser among the Coe's Golden Drop Plums; in California, the Tragedy Plum is found to fruit better in the presence of a Plum called Clymen. Gooseberries, Red and White Currant and Black Currant all have adhesive globular pollen which does not get carried to the stigmas unless some mechanical means is applied. Hence the importance of hive and bumble bees to transfer the pollen. For experimental purposes bushes have been covered over with muslin to exclude bees, with the result that the bushes were practically fruitless, while uncovered bushes adjoining bore plenty of fruit. Bumble-bees are great pollinisers of Gooseberries, working in worse weather and later in the evening than the hive and smaller wild bees. In the case of Strawberries and Raspberries, hive bees are undoubtedly of great benefit, especially in blossoming seasons with little sunshine, as bees, being then on the spot, do a great deal of pollinating in a short time when the weather is favourable to

their work. Strawberries and Raspberries appear to be able to set fruit, however, without insects, through the movement of the air carrying the pollen in warm sunny weather.

The study of pollination in reference to fruit-growing seems to teach two lessons: (1) The importance of having hives of bees distributed about among fruit plantations. One bee expert recommends one hive to every half-acre or acre of fruit; one fruit-grower in Worcestershire has one hive to four acres, placed in lots of one or two throughout his plantations. It is advisable to have the bees close to their work, and to have wind-breaks to shelter the plantation, as the bees cannot well work in a strong wind. (2) In planting an orchard, plant the two, three, or more varieties not in large blocks of one variety, but in alternate strips of, say, two of one kind, in order to



CHOCOLATE POT BY JOHN FAWCERTY, 1704.

enable cross-pollination to take place. In Apples it is important to note in planting their period of blossoming, as if the earliest-flowering kinds, as Irish Peach or Prince Bismarck, were planted with Graham's Royal Jubilee or Court Pendu Plat, the latest-flowering varieties, the former would be quite, or almost, out of flower before the latter kinds commenced to bloom. The different varieties of Cherry, Plum and Pear blossom more nearly at the same time than do the different kinds of Apple.

CECIL H. HOOPER.

A NEW AUBRIETIA.

DURING the spring months the rock garden owes not a little of its beauty to the Aubrietias, trailing plants that are studded at this season with their cruciform flowers. These latter vary somewhat in colour, the best-known species, *deltoidea*,

having blossoms of dull purple. During recent years raisers have been endeavouring to secure plants with good, deep blue flowers, and although several varieties have approached the desired goal, not one can be considered entirely satisfactory. The best that I have yet seen is named Lloyd Edwards, and hails from the Principality. It is a neat and dainty plant in every way, and the colour of its blossoms is good deep blue which, however, fades slightly in bright sunshine. Although this *Aubrietia* has been exhibited for at least one or two seasons, it does not seem to be very widely known, hence the reason for referring to it here. Cuttings of *Aubrietias* may be successfully rooted during May, or, if preferred, seeds may be sown. To ensure that the desired colours are obtained, however, it is best to rely upon cuttings. Although regarded by many as common, or not altogether desirable plants, the *Aubrietias* possess an old-world charm that appeals to lovers of old-fashioned garden flowers.

THE WATER HAWTHORN.

Although the flowers of this beautiful aquatic plant have little in their appearance that is suggestive of the Hawthorn of our hedgerows, yet in fragrance there is a great similarity; hence its popular name. Another of its cognomens is the Cape Pond-weed; but the first name commends itself most to us in this country. It is one of the prettiest and most free-flowering of all the aquatics that are hardy in our gardens, and as it does not spread at a very fast rate, it may be looked upon as an ideal plant for a small ornamental pool or pond. It needs a depth of from one foot to eighteen inches of water, and should be planted well in the mud, so that it has an opportunity of becoming well established, after which it will usually take care of itself. May and the early part of June is the best time of the year for planting this aquatic, good strong roots of which can be

bought from a few hardy plant nurserymen. In addition to its value for the outdoor water garden, this aquatic is sometimes grown in tanks in a cool greenhouse, where a healthy plant is seldom without flowers the whole year round. Its foliage and blossoms form a neat, compact carpet on the surface of the water, and practically the only attention required is the removal of leaves and flowers when they show signs of decay.

A PLANT FOR THE WATER-SIDE.

A well-kept pool or pond forms one of the most pleasant features of a typical English garden during the summer months, yet it is safe to assert that, where such a desirable feature exists, its capabilities are not, in the majority of gardens, utilised to anything like their fullest extent. Instead of the few commonplace plants that usually find a home in such pools or ponds, there is a large army of distinct, beautiful and easily-grown kinds that ought to be included. The purpose of this note is to draw attention to the so-called Wild Rice, *Zizania aquatica*, an annual plant that is apparently known to only a few gardeners in this country. Although it is now too late to sow seeds of this Rice, young plants may be obtained from a few nurserymen who specialise in aquatics, and as May is a good month in which to put them in their summer home, no time should be lost in procuring a few. This Rice ought to be planted at the side of a pond or pool in about six inches of water, and if a group of from eight to a dozen plants can be formed, the effect in autumn will be a most imposing and pleasing one. The slender, wand-like stems often attain a height of ten feet, and as the grass-like foliage possesses a vivid green tint, the whole plant is suggestive of coolness, so much appreciated on hot days. Not the least interesting feature are the flower-clusters, which form long, pendulous tassels of that graceful habit so characteristic of the whole plant.

H.

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK:

A KIND of bookmaking highly deserving of encouragement is that of writing family history. It has the immediate effect of causing private papers to be read with something of the attention now bestowed on public records and ancient manuscripts. Directly it embellishes and imparts life and reality to the history of the nation, because it shows how the individual is affected by great events in the evolution of Great Britain. There is no stage in the life of any citizen which, accurately related, does not help us to form a picture of the time in which he lived; and whoever wishes to get at the facts must perforce dive into many receptacles of curious intelligence. Even the two events which happen to all—birth and death—escape monotony on recital, because of an infinite variation in the circumstances under which they take place.

These reflections are inspired by reading Lady Elliott-Drake's *The Family and Heirs of Sir Francis Drake* (Smith, Elder). Here the famous central figure is so well known that there is little need to enlarge upon his story, and Lady Elliott-Drake expressly warns the reader that her book is about "the characters of those who carried on the name." Among them is not anyone of highest distinction, but they were "useful in their generation" and willing "to spend and be spent in the service of their country." The interest of the book lies in the fact that it sets forth the annals of a typical country family, and thus in its way reflects the country life of the past. It is natural to associate the name of Drake with the pleasant land of Devon, and it would appear that there have been Drakes in Devon since the reign of Henry III.; but the Drakes of Buckland are first heard of in the reign of Edward III.

A sidelight is thrown on the perils of a career like that of Sir Francis by the sad and fascinating story of his cousin and whilom page, John Drake. The barque of this young sailor was wrecked near the mouth of the River Plate. Eighteen persons escaped in the boats, but after ten days' travel on land they were met by a horde of savages, and after what must have been a desperate fight on their part they were taken prisoners, and for about fifteen months, during which many died of ill-treatment, they were treated as slaves by the savages. At the end of that time, Drake and Fairweather (who had been master of the pinnace) escaped to the other side of the river in a canoe; but it took them three days to accomplish the voyage, and "they were much pinched for lack of meate." They were succoured by Indian servants of the Spanish, but it was only to fall ultimately into the hands of the Inquisitors at Lima. Within the last few years documents have been discovered at Simancas which enable the subsequent history of John Drake to be told. As an appendix there is printed the record of his examination before the Secret Tribunal, for John Drake, though a bold and daring seaman, did not covet the martyr's crown. Ultimately he appears to have married a Spaniard and become the progenitor of the family named Drake del Castillo, who claim to have the blood of El Draque in their veins. His confession before the Secret Tribunal is one of the most interesting stories in the book.

During that troublous period which ended with the establishment of the Commonwealth, the history of the Drake family attains to very keen interest indeed. The second Sir Francis Drake married Dorothea Pym, the daughter of "King" Pym, as

he was called in reference to the indisputable sway that he exercised over the populace of his time. In his private life Pym was delightful, and had educated his daughter in advance of the time. Her letters, we are told, were written in a small round hand, and remain very legible to this day. What is more, they are perfectly spelt, an uncommon characteristic of seventeenth century letters. Between her and her brother Charles there was a very strong bond of affection, and it is a thousand pities that his letters to her have been lost, as they are in every way likely to have given a very vivid account of the tumultuous proceedings in London, the trial of Stafford and his brave death. Only a few of her letters, however, have been preserved, and, though charming and intimate, they only reflect the quiet life of Devonshire, where the stir of coming revolution had not yet made itself felt. Not till the war was actually begun does it seem to have been thought of in the remote country districts. When it did break out, the Drakes were naturally on the side of the Parliamentarians. The following note has a curious interest for collectors of silver plate:

Contributions of men, horses, money and arms were eagerly pressed for on both sides; and as plate was accepted in lieu of coin, large quantities were brought in to be melted down; which explains why it is that so few families possess English silver with a half-mark older than the time of Charles II.

The magistrates of Devon were nearly all Parliamentarians, and agreed, at the expense of the county, to raise a troop of horse for the national service. It was not a very magnificent proposal, as a troop of horse consisted of only sixty men, with the additional corporals, drummers, farriers and saddlers. Lady Elliott-Drake has been able to find material that throws many side-lights on the state of England at the time. Changes of side took place very frequently, although the cases were rare indeed in which men like Sir Richard Grenville acted 'out of treachery and dishonesty. But "Skellum Grenville" was a dreadful man. Clarendon mentions that on one occasion, after dining with Colonel Digby, the colonel sent half-a-dozen troopers to escort him home. We quote the historian:

In his return he saw four or five fellows coming out of a Neighbour Wood, with burdens of wood upon their backs, which they had stolen. He bid the troopers fetch those fellows to him; and finding that they were soldiers of the Garrison, he made one of them hang all the rest, which to save his own life he was contented to do: so strong his Appetite was to those executions he had been accustomed to in Ireland, without any kind of commission or pretence of authority.

When the war broke out one of his first actions was to hang "his wife's steward, whose only fault was faithfulness to her interests, and took possession of all her lands." It will thus be seen that the great drama of the Civil War was played out in Devonshire by a varied assortment of characters. If we have Grenville on one side, we have Pym and his daughter on the other. From Dorothea's portrait, which is reproduced as an illustration, we can easily understand her sway over the hearts of those with whom she came into contact.

The second book begins with Sir Francis Drake, the third baronet, 1662-1717, and ends with the death of the fifth baronet in 1794. It is enriched with far more original correspondence than appears in the first volume, and embedded in it is more than one romance. Perhaps the most striking is that which resulted in the marriage of Henry Pollexfen, son and heir of Sir Henry Pollexfen, the Lord Chief Justice of His Majesty's Court of Common Pleas, with the daughter of Sir Francis Drake

He had almost been given up in his youth as an epileptic. He came into the care of Sir Francis Drake when he was nineteen years of age, hopelessly ill as the physicians thought; but before long the air of Dartmoor and the wholesome country life at Buckland improved him vastly, and the epileptic fits became less frequent. One consequence of this was that when he was between his twentieth and twenty-first birthdays he fell head over ears in love with Gertrude Drake, six years his senior. Henry, who in spite of his affliction is one of the most likeable men who figure in these pages, found his experience justify the proverb that the course of true love never yet did run smooth. But with unfaltering constancy he remained true to his ideal, and was married to Gertrude Drake on December 21st, 1699. The ceremony took place with a certain amount of mystery at a little moorland church, Samford Spiney, about four miles from Buckland, and the two had a happy if somewhat chequered career. There are many other points on which we should have liked to touch, but one will suffice. We quote the passage referring to the changes at Nutwell as illustrating in a striking way the manner in which many of the beautiful old houses were ruined in the middle of the eighteenth century:

The chapel built by Sir John Dinham in 1371, approached then by a road which led almost past it, had ceased to be of any public use for Divine Service, when Sir Francis resolved to convert it into a library. He cut through the old waggon roof, in order to hang from it a handsome but quite modern plaster ceiling, bricked up the Gothic windows on the east and north, and divided the room into two, so that he might get more wall-space for books.

Perhaps the worst vandalism perpetrated was the removal of the Gothic windows on the south side of the building, and the insertion of three ordinary square-headed ones in their places.

Passages like this will be read with unmitigated regret; but they must not be taken as fair samples of Lady Elliott-Drake's work. She has very frankly set down all kinds of interesting facts, and not only so, but arranged them in a pleasant and easily-read narrative. The work might be described in a phrase of Stevenson's as "a foot-note to history," a foot-note dealing with one of the most famous English houses and a delightful district of Great Britain.

YSABELLA DE ARAGONIA SFORCIA.

Isabella of Milan, by Christopher Hare. (Harper.)

"AT the name of Isabella d'Aragona there rises before us the tragic figure of a hapless Princess for whom the world went wrong—a brave-hearted woman who fought alone against all Europe for those near and dear to her." Thus Mr. Christopher Hare introduces to us the famous heroine whose life-story he has added to his other works upon the famous personages and families of the Italian Renaissance. The history of Isabella is written in a series of intimate letters by her lady-in-waiting, Violante da Canossa, to her invalid sister, and we think that Mr. Hare has been mistaken in adopting this method of relating it. The letters are far too modern both in form and expression; they do not reproduce the epistolary style of those days, so discursive and full of quaint formality and charming domestic detail. We have only to compare this book with one recently published, "The Lives of the Early Medici, as Told in Their Letters" (translated by Mrs. Janet Ross), to see exactly in what manner Mr. Hare has failed in this part of his task. For the rest, the book is brightly written, and is interesting and eminently readable. Isabella was the daughter of Alfonso, Duke of Calabria, and in childhood was betrothed to her cousin, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, Duke of Milan. The first chapters relate the incidents of her voyage to Genoa from Naples, and the subsequent perilous journey across the mountains to Milan in the depths of winter. Isabella, who was then eighteen years old, "treated it all as a merry adventure." Probably few people could have looked forward to such an apparently golden future as hers, and certainly few can have suffered so cruel a disillusionment as did this Princess who in after days once bitterly signed herself "Ysabella de Aragonia Sforzia, unica in disgrazia." At Tortona the betrothed couple met, and Violante was from the first unfavourably impressed by the appearance of her beloved Duchess's future husband—"a small, insignificant figure, with a pinched, sallow face of sickly appearance, and a sulky mouth." With him was his uncle, Lodovico Sforza, called "Il Moro." The marriage took place in the beautiful cathedral at Milan, and it was not long before Isabella discovered that her husband was Duke of Milan in name only, all power and authority having been completely usurped by Lodovico, who encouraged him in his idle, dissolute life. Three children were born to them—Francesco, of whom she was to be so cruelly deprived, and who died in exile in France; Bona, afterwards Queen of Poland; and the little Ippolita, who died in childhood. After Lodovico's marriage with the beautiful and witty Beatrice D'Este—perhaps one of the most fascinating of Renaissance figures—Isabella found herself thrust into quite a secondary position. Gian Galeazzo became a fretful invalid, he gave way to drink, ill-treated his wife and died in 1494, some six years after their marriage, his end being hastened, it was supposed, by poison administered by his uncle, Lodovico. Overlooking the claims of little Francesco, Lodovico was immediately proclaimed Duke of Milan with acclamation, "and the very next day came forth from the Rocca clothed in a gorgeous mantle of gold brocade, with the ducal sceptre and sword borne in state before him." Thus he rode through Milan, accompanied by the Ambassadors of Florence and Ferrara, "to the martial sound of trumpets, while the people shouted 'Moro! Moro! Duca! Duca!'" and the bells of the churches rang peals in his honour. . . . But the tyrant was destined to fall upon evil days. His beautiful wife died in 1497 at the age of twenty-one. Milan fell into the hands of the French in 1499 under Louis XII., who laid claim to the duchy through his grandmother, Valentine Visconti. Lodovico fled, his castello having been treacherously surrendered to the enemy by the trusted Bernardino da Corte. Louis bore away Isabella's son, the little Francesco,

into exile; he entered religion, and died at the age of twenty-one as Abbot of Noirmoutiers. Lodovico had made tardy compensation to Isabella for the injustice he had shown to her and her family by giving her the Duchy of Bari and an income of six thousand ducats. She died in Naples in 1524 at the age of fifty-three years. Throughout the book there are interesting glimpses of celebrated persons of the time. Isabella visits Leonardo da Vinci in the refectory of the Convent of St. Maria delle Grazie, while he is at work on his famous fresco of the Last Supper. Baldassare Castiglione relates to her the strange history of the Savona sailor, Cristoforo Colon (Columbus), who declared he would make a journey to the East by sailing due west. We are afforded a charming glimpse of Isabella's views upon the education of her little son in her "Rules for my son, August, 1496," to which we think modern mothers could add but little: "He must learn at all times to do honour to God and Holy Church . . . to be respectful and obedient to his parents and teachers, and other good and wise people. . . . He must be careful to show politeness to all . . . to be pleasant of speech to everyone . . . he must be taught to keep his hands under control as well as his tongue, and on no account must he lose his temper under any provocation . . . he shall not listen to slander, nor tell lies, nor practice any form of deceit." The illustrations include photographs of many famous portraits, such as those of Beatrice D'Este, Bianca Sforza, Isabella D'Este, Baldassare Castiglione and Lucrezia Crivelli, as well as a photograph of the fine altar-piece painted by Zenale di Treviglio for the Church of St. Ambrogio, which shows Lodovico and Beatrice and their two little sons kneeling in the foreground. The absence of an index is rather an unfortunate omission in a book of this kind, depriving it of much of its usefulness as a work of reference.

A REAL TELLER OF TALES.

The Girl from the Marsh Croft, by Selma Lagerlöf. (Werner Laurie.)

THE mantle of Hans Andersen has been picked up by many, but it has fitted few. In the quaint sincerity, the simplicity and sweetness of the writings of Selma Lagerlöf it has become evident that here is one whose mantle, though all her own, is of the same stuff and cut as the great master's. Hers is an art that is absolutely devoid of two things which have in these latter days, as an almost inevitable result of the multiplication of models and of the increase of learning, become very nearly inseparable from art, namely, sophistication and self-consciousness. The translation is equally simple and un-self-conscious. Had it been done in more academic English it would not have been so near the original. It has a naïveté and a truth resulting from the close following of the text even to the literal translation of an idiom, which preserves unspoiled the quaintness of the tales. It is difficult to praise one story more than another where all reach their aim so truly and humbly; but "The Legend of the Christmas Rose" is, perhaps, the most exquisite thing in the book. "Why the Pope Lived to be so Old" comes near to it, while the first and longest story, "The Girl from the Marsh Croft," is full of that beauty of art which, in Miss Lagerlöf's writings, is so wrought in with the beauty of kindness and of truth that the three make but one impression.

INTERACTION.

Mrs. Elmsley, by Hector Munro. (Constable.)

THE study of two natures in their action and reaction upon each other always makes an admirable subject for a novel, and it is here excellently well done. Liddel's is a curious temperament, impulsive, sensitive, shy. He has met, influenced and been influenced by, many women, but till Mrs. Elmsley crosses his path no one has held him. Mrs. Elmsley's is also a curious temperament. At first she is not attractive. One imagines she is going to turn out one of those *femmes incompréhensibles* of which we have had too many lately. But her originality tells as the story goes on, even though it is a story told with coldness and restraint. Its interest is one that grows gradually, and its atmosphere is avowedly intellectual. But its sympathies are wide in spite of its many epigrams. The minor characters include many types well drawn and acutely realised, of which not the least justly treated is Mrs. Elmsley's husband. And in both Liddel and the woman he loves we recognise with gratitude and interest the presence of that unusual but thoroughly human quality which for lack of a better word we will call goodness.

AN EGYPTIAN GUIDE-BOOK.

Oriental Cairo, by Douglas Sladen. (Hurst and Blackett.)

THE very best of Cairo is in this book—its streets, its mosques, its nationalities, its stories, its effects, its customs, its beauty. No one should ever dream of going there without it. Let the traveller be seeing Cairo for the tenth time, he will never see Cairo unless he sees at least some of it through the eyes of Mr. Douglas Sladen. This writer's enthusiasm, knowledge and spontaneous linking of past and present, his clear and definite directions and the radiance of his descriptions, make this a book which shows Oriental Cairo even to the reader sitting in an English armchair. It is avowedly a guide—but such a guide as one only wishes were available for all the places of wonder that one visits, and misses the heart of, for sheer lack of someone who can, like Mr. Sladen, lend us his eyes and share with us his knowledge.

OVER-EARNEST.

Inhaling, by Georgina Lee. (Chatto and Windus.)

A GREAT deal of sentiment, a strong sex-obsession, not always wisely treated, not much humour, and a rather too persistent dwelling on physical details. These are the faults. A clean moral, an honest ending, a good deal of movement, and a definite attempt to define a definite psychological situation and place the blame on the right shoulders. These are the virtues of the book.

UNEXPECTED ENDINGS.

Once Upon a Time, by Richard Harding Davis. (Duckworth.)

AMERICAN stories of America, fluent, quick and a little far-fetched, whose point is that they each turn out in the last paragraph to be something different to what the reader has been led to consider them through the preceding paragraphs. They are fully as effective as anything can be which is not wholly convincing, and are brightly and neatly told.

A SAD CASE.

The Case of Letitia, by Alexandra Watson. (Smith, Elder and Co.)

A PRETTY story of a young country woman who chooses wrongly the first time and rightly the second, being more fortunate than most people in that she gets the chance of a second time. Rob is, perhaps, too much a hero of the "strong, silent man" type, of whom someone said recently that they are always "either Scotchmen or fools." Rob, however, is no fool. Letitia is rather the fool, in that she is dazzled by the plausible scoundrel Teddy, and only after much suffering realises where to look for happiness. The tale of her wanderings, of her ultimate salvation, and of the simple life of the little village circle in Houghton, is attractively told. The only false note in the book is the giving up of her child by Letitia in order to prove her devotion to the jealous Rob. There would have been another way out of the situation, difficult though it undoubtedly was. Letitia was not the woman to do so wrong a thing, nor Rob the man to allow her to. But apart from this the story of Letitia is one of interest, and the heroine a real and engaging personality.

MISUNDERSTANDING CORDIALE.

Dividing Waters, by T. A. R. Wylie. (Mills and Boon.)

IN this well-meaning tale of Germany and England, all the Germans except one are saints or heroes, and all the English except one are squires or knaves. Well, this is not a perfectly accurate valuation, of course, but the damaging fact would damage the book less if only the English had all been English and the Germans all Germans! But this is not so, either, and here is the real fault at which the reviewer mildly raises his voice in protest. He, too, has been in Germany!

He has loved many Germans; he has admired several; he has admitted their national superiority wherever they are superior, with a generosity wholly untainted by any loss of his private conviction that, except in one particular, the English can manage all right without being superior; and he has come straight home from a "Kaiser Parade" to a Territorial Review to watch, with a heart as black with raging over that one particular as even Miss Wylie could wish, Mr. Haldane's infants play at soldiering. But he has always found the Germans to be Germans, not extraordinarily virtuous Englishmen with German names; and that is where he cannot "pass" Miss Wylie. Germany and the Germans can afford to be drawn; they can afford to be understood. But this is not character-drawing; it is not even national character-drawing. It is a meritorious enthusiasm for Germany that Miss Wylie has got on to her pages; but it is not Germany!

BOOKS TO ORDER FROM THE LIBRARY.

A Charming Humbug, by Imogen Clark. (Methuen.)

Poor Emma! by Evelyn Tempest. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

The Colonel's Story, by Mrs. Roger A. Pryor. (Macmillan.)

The Irresistible Husband, by Vincent Brown. (Chapman and Hall.)

People of Popham, by Mrs. George Wemyss. (Constable.)

Large and Small Holdings: A Study of English Agricultural Economics, by Hermann Levy. Translated by Ruth Kenyon. (Cambridge University Press.)

[SHORT NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS WILL BE FOUND ON PAGE 40*.]

ON THE GREEN.

By HORACE HUTCHINSON AND BERNARD DARWIN.

BATTLE OF THE SEXES AT STOKE POGES.

WHEN the idea was mooted of that team match between the sexes which we determined the other day in the men's favour at Stoke Poges, I took a good deal of trouble to find out the opinions of those who ought to know about the odds that the men ought to give. Especially I consulted the leading professionals, thinking them quite without prejudice in their view, and the majority seemed to think that we men ought to give the ladies a third. It was soon after the match in which Miss Leitch beat Mr. Hilton, and perhaps the result of that had its effect on their verdict. Harry Vardon, always gallant, said that four strokes represented the difference between us; but we must merely take this, in the light of the later experience acquired at Stoke Poges, as doing greater credit to his chivalry than to his golfing judgment. We finally played the match, giving the ladies a half, and we won it by a margin which looks conclusive, if such a word is to be said on a golfing subject. The teams were rather well chosen, as representative of the sexes, for while we were without Mr. Ball, Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Graham, they had not Miss Grant Suttie, Miss Dorothy Campbell or Miss Leitch, so we may call the handicap level on that score. For the rest, both sides could easily have changed individual members of their teams without much alteration of their aggregate strength; but it cannot be said that any changes could have made either of the teams appreciably stronger. There was only one man who was not "of International rank"—phrase reminiscent of the young lady in the chorus who said she could not think of marrying a man "below the rank of a stock-broker"—and not one of the ladies had not fought for her country.

WHY WE WON.

I do not quite know, even now, why we did win. What surprised most of us who did not know a great deal about ladies' play was the length of their driving against the wind. Down wind, when the ball might be hoisted into the air and left to sail its way down it, a man could out-drive his partner by fifty yards or so as easily as he could gain five on her against the wind. There was a deal of wind at Stoke Poges that day, and in spite of their fine driving in face of it this must have been all against the ladies, if only because they are of the skirted sex. Besides, a man, with power to keep the ball in the air, can use the wind in aid of his shots much more effectively than a lady who has a shorter carry. But it is in their second shots and in their play through the green generally that the weaker sex are the weaker. They cannot control the ball when they beat it up out of a bad lie as a man can. After all, even with the rubber-cored ball, muscle has its value. But this was a very interesting match. If rain had not fallen the previous night and so put a good deal of check on the ball's running, the result might have been reversed. I hope the match will be played again next year, if not before, and rather hope that the result will be reversed.

THE GREATEST AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP ON RECORD.

There is reason to think that when the battle is set in array at Prestwick for the amateur championship there will be a stronger body of warriors in that field than has ever appeared in it before. We do not know how many of our native dark horses there may be in their stables ready, like Mr. Aylmer and Mr. Mitchell last year, to make a gallant charge into the veteran ranks, but we do know something about those who are coming over the sea, of Mr. Michael Scott and of Mr. Pearce, both of whom have won both open and amateur championships of Australia, and we do know something of Mr. C. Evans and of Mr. F. Herreshoff, who are coming from the United States. I know Mr. Herreshoff's golf personally, and it is very good and very strong; but I also know this: that when I was in America, just before their amateur championship, a man who was a competent judge backed Mr. Evans at evens, against any other three, to win outright. One of the three chosen was Mr. Herreshoff, and if the chance of Mr. Evans, singly, was really equal to the united chances of three Mr. Herreshoffs, then it is not very clear to me whom we have here that is to beat him. Of course, I am not implying that I think he will win the amateur championship. One would not expect that, in such a field, of any one man, even if his name were James Braid; but I do think, from what I have gathered about his game, that the chances will be in Mr. Evans' favour in every individual match that he plays, no matter whom it is against.

PROFESSIONALS GONE TO AMERICA.

We have lost, out of our amateur ranks, Mr. Andrew, who has gone out as professor of the game to America, and it is a big loss, especially at Prestwick, which he knows and plays so well on. Did he not once lead all the field there in the qualifying rounds for the open championship? Another good man—but he has never upheld the amateur standard—gone to the States is Tom

Vardon. A. Elphick, whom frequenters of Ashdown Forest will remember as an apprentice in Rowe's shop, and who has more lately been at Gatwick, has gone to be the professional at the National Golf Course on Long Island—a splendid green, and likely to be the very best in America, in my humble judgment, even if it has not succeeded in reproducing exact copies of all the best holes in the golfing world. Its formal opening is to take place this spring, but it appears that the spring in Eastern America, even as here, is belated by about a fortnight.

H. G. H.

AN EXPERIMENT IN HANDICAPPING.

It has been urged from time to time that the receiver of odds does not receive odds enough in match play. He receives at present three-quarters of the difference in handicap, and he generally gets a beating into the bargain. One has only to look at the records of match-play tournaments—the Calcutta Cup and the Jubilee Vase, for instance—to see that the winners nearly always come from the ranks of those who owe rather than receive strokes, and those who receive any large number of strokes have practically not been in the hunt at all. Among those who regard this state of things as unjust is Mr. Fowler, and so he has lately given a prize for a match-play tournament at Westward Ho! in which not three-quarters of the difference, but the whole difference, in handicap was given or received. I have just been sent some statistics of this tournament, and they are rather interesting. There entered seventy-seven players, whose handicap ranged from +2 to 20. In the first round there were eleven matches played, and in eight of them the givers of odds won. In the second round eighteen givers of strokes won, and in the third round eight. In the fourth round things began to get more even, for the victors consisted of four givers and four receivers, while in the fifth the givers were thoroughly routed, only one of them winning. In the semi-final a 14 beat a 12 and a 4 beat a scratch, and in the final 4 beat 14 by five up and four to play.

SOME GUESSES.

Such is a brief record of the run of the play, and it would seem to show that it is perfectly possible to concede the full difference in handicap on a first-class course. There is importance on those last few words, because Westward Ho! with a fine wind sweeping across the course is a very different place from a smoothly-shaven suburban lawn bowered in sheltering trees. Possibly the short-handicap brigade would have a bad time upon the ordinarily easy inland course in dry summer weather. No doubt they would be horribly crushed if their long-handicap opponents played that which they are pleased to call their game; but then, the beauty of long-handicap opponents is that with them this is of comparatively rare occurrence. It remains for some benefactor to give a prize on some inland course—the easier the better for the purposes of the experiment—to be played for under these new conditions. If these experiments are made on a large scale, it is quite possible that people may arrive at the conclusion that there ought to be different systems for different courses, and that only on the more difficult courses can the full odds be given. If that were so, I see one grave disadvantage looming ahead for the scratch man. Whatever the real merits of the case, he will, in fact, always have to give the full odds, because no committee will ever be found to admit that its course is an easy one.

DELAMERE FOREST.

If Mr. Fowler has been making things easier for the weaker brethren at Westward Ho!, he has been quite sufficiently stony-hearted at Delamere Forest, where he has just laid out a new course. I saw Braid and other great men play over it; and I also tried to play over it myself, and I am sure that it is a very interesting course, and, as regards several of the strokes demanded, extraordinarily difficult. The course lies high on a great rolling tract of land perched above the surrounding forest, and having one of the biggest and jolliest of views. The ground is undulating—and, indeed, stout, elderly players will sometimes think that undulating faintly describes it. But the steep hills and deep valleys make for good golfing shots; there are no greens "like the roof of a house," no horrid back-walls and only one really bad blind hole, which is going to be altered. The soil is nice and light, and sand is to be had anywhere upon the course for the digging. As is only to be expected from the architect, there are some bunkers very near the greens, and there are some shots to be played with one's heart in one's mouth. The eighteenth, for instance, is perfectly blood-curdling, and will break the heart of many a prospective medal winner; and the four short holes are one and all excellent. Altogether, although I failed conspicuously to strike the ball there, I take off my hat with the profoundest respect to Delamere Forest.

B. D.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ABNORMALLY-COLOURED GANNET AT THE BASS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Nothing more has been seen so far of the abnormally-coloured gannet, whose presence roused a mild excitement at the Bass Rock last summer. It will be remembered that this anomalous bird was fully described and twice figured in *COUNTRY LIFE*, from photographs taken by Mr. Riley Fortune and Mr. J. Atkinson (*COUNTRY LIFE*, September 3rd and December 24th, 1910), but that nothing definite was decided about its origin. The obliging Principal of the lighthouse, Mr. J. M. Campbell, informs me that up to April 14th, when he came ashore on leave, there had been no sign of this bird, although a close watch had been kept for it, and I imagine there is now little expectation of its being seen again at the Bass Rock or anywhere else.—J. H. GURNEY.

BIRDS IN LONDON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Yesterday I saw a nuthatch in Kensington Gardens. I do not remember ever to have seen a record of the bird's presence there. It would be most interesting if it could be proved that the birds nest in the gardens, and there certainly seems to be no reason why they should not. A keeper told me that he had twice heard the cuckoo this week at about 7 a.m. On April 22nd there were several willow wrens in St. James' Park, and it was a delightful experience to hear the exquisite little song. A second magpie was recently turned out in Kensington Gardens, where a solitary magpie has been for years. But the newcomer (probably a second male) was not welcomed by the old inhabitant, and has now, I am told, disappeared. On April 26th two, at least, of the black-headed gulls in St. James' Park had brown caps, though one still wore on its wings the brown plumage of immaturity. It seems strange that these birds, in full nuptial garb apparently, should remain here so late. A certain number of immature birds seem to stay with us all the summer.—J. R. H.

THE "KYNGES BEESTES."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Mr. Law's reply to my letter contains a suggestion which I cannot leave unnoticed. It will, perhaps, put the question of the extracts from the Hampton Court accounts beyond further dispute if I state definitely that these extracts, made by Mr. Baines four years ago, and used by Mr. Peers in his paper in "*Archæologia*," include all the references to the beasts on the stone bridge. Mr. Law can doubtless, if he wishes, see these extracts at the Office of Works and satisfy himself on the point, and, in fact, unless he wishes to lie under the imputation of deliberately avoiding the issue which I have raised, I venture to think that it is incumbent on him to do so.—W. H. SR. JOHN HOPE.

DEW PONDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—When quartered at Winchester, five-and-forty years ago, I was much interested in the dew-ponds on the surrounding Downs, and I notice two points, which were then much insisted upon, which are not referred to in your interesting account of dew-ponds on April 1st. I was then taught there are but few localities favourable for constructing them, and some ponds were pointed out to me as always holding water in the hottest summers, while others invariably dried up, though close by, and in the hot summer of 1868 this fact was completely verified. The place to be chosen was a locality where warm air was suddenly encountered, just after sunset, on a hot summer's day, like an oasis in the midst of the chilly atmosphere; the spot which cattle choose for their resting-place when lying down for the night. No doubt one reason for this doctrine is that water takes much longer to part with its stored-up heat than the air does, and so the surface of the water at that particular place would more nearly approach the temperature of the air there than in the immediate vicinity where it had become so much colder, and the contrast, therefore, would be less; and another cause may be that these warm patches of air probably attract moisture from the colder portions, and so are charged with an extra quantity, to be deposited in the pond as dew. Secondly, it was insisted upon that a dew-pond must never be deep, though I cannot now remember the exact depth which ought not to be exceeded; but to the best of my recollection this was either three or four feet. No explanation was offered for this restriction of depth; it was only a fact which had been proved by experience; but the reason seems apparent—that there should be no bulk of warm water below to keep rising to the top, in displacement of the surface-water as it became chilled, and so, by being warmer than the air, preventing condensation of the water held in suspension. Perhaps these points have been carefully considered by Mr. Martin; but no mention having been made of them, I venture to bring them forward for consideration.—R. F. MEYSEY-THOMPSON.

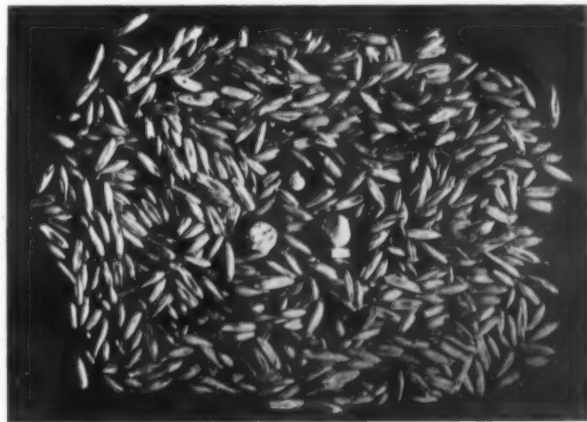
[We have submitted this letter to Mr. Martin, who says: "Colonel Meysey-Thompson's note is very interesting, as showing the interest felt in the subject so long ago as the date he quotes. It is very noticeable that ponds in close proximity behave in different ways. Empty depressions are found scattered about in plenty, while close by will be found ponds which still hold water. But I have been unable at present to find any other reason for this than that the empty ones have been neglected and have become leaky. This is, I know, a very prosaic explanation, but it repeatedly holds good. I have met with ponds which, even in very wet weather, have been gradually lowering their level. Then the farmer comes along and cleans them out and has them re-trampled, with the result that the level again rises. The first point made by Colonel Meysey-Thompson is new to me to some extent, but it assumes that there are these "oases" of warm air in the midst of a chilling atmosphere. Have they ever been proved to exist? After nightfall there is, on a clear night, rapid radiation from the earth's surface. Possibly there will be, to some extent, unequal radiation. There will be less rapid radiation, of course, under trees, and cattle will choose to rest there sometimes, but not by any means always. A pond is sometimes dug under a tree because it receives the drip off the tree, and this helps to fill the pond. But because this is under a tree, this is just the place where radiation is arrested, and consequently true dew will not be formed. The point is, Are there any such warm spots after nightfall on the summits of the Downs, where there are no trees at all; and if there are these warm spots, do they remain stationary or are they shifting? If they are permanent, are they found on any particular kind of soil, such as a pocket of clay on the chalk? Clay will hold up water, while chalk will not. If there were a pond built just where one of these oases of warm air was always permanent, this would at once compel us to give up the idea that dew was deposited in the pond, because it is contended by those who

believe in dew-ponds that it is by the chilling of the air at night-time by radiation that the surface of the pond becomes chilled below dew-point, and thus causes the air resting above the pond to disgorge its vapour in the form of dew. A mass of warm air would certainly hold more moisture than a similar mass of cooler air; but it must itself become chilled below dew-point before it will deposit dew. I can see that if such a spot could be found where heated air remained nightly after the surrounding parts had become reduced in temperature, and a waterproof trench were dug there, such heated air, when it did become reduced below dew-point, would give out more dew than that elsewhere. It would be interesting to know if it has been noticed on our Downs that cattle left out all night do select the same spots for their resting-places. As a rule I do not think many are left out all night. It was very noticeable that the many ponds that I examined were remarkably shallow. Four feet was rare, and most did not exceed two and a-half feet, although thirty or forty feet across. The shallowness of these ponds seems to be connected with the fact that below about four feet diurnal variations of temperature cease to be noticeable, and the old theory of the dew-pond was that the whole must be lowered in temperature if dew is to be deposited therein. Upward and downward convection currents would prevent sufficient chilling taking place to reduce the whole to below dew-point during the short summer's night. If the ponds were much shallower, they would be the more likely to dry up quickly, as, indeed, many have been found to do. There is much yet to be found out about these ponds, and any further light that can be thrown on the subject would be welcome.—ED.]

A WOOD-PIGEON'S CROP.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A friend of mine a few days ago gave me a good specimen of the cushat or wood-pigeon. Noticing its crop being very full, I examined and weighed



A MODEST MEAL.

the contents, which consisted of a good sample of white oats, two peas and one small shell of *Helix virgata*. The oats numbered seven hundred and ninety-seven, and when dried weighed one and a-quarter ounces.—G. PARKIN.

EXUDING SAP.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Without seeing the place mentioned in Mr. Irwin's letter, I should not like to offer an opinion; but I have seen broken branches of birch trees at this season pouring out sap in such quantity that there was a pool on the ground beneath them.—H. J. ELWES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As the subject of "bleeding" of plants is a very complicated one, not yet completely understood, I do not think it can be properly discussed in a letter. The subject is dealt with in Tost's "*Plant Physiology*," pages 50-55, translated by Gibson (Clarendon Press). The bleeding is a vital process; it can be stopped by chloroform. The pressure, which in spring is exerted in the case of the birch, is two atmospheres; and as much as thirty-six litres have been taken from a birch tree in eight days. Usually wounds are necessary; but in Mr. Irwin's case, though no wounds were seen, they may have been there (and moles, diseased roots, etc.), else why should not every birch in the country make a swamp round it? It is a very interesting case.—AUGUSTINE HENRY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The swamping of turf by the outflow of sap from the roots of trees must surely proceed from injury to the bark on the roots. The circulation of sap proceeds upwards through the vessels of the stem, and descends by the cambium layer on the outer surface of the stem and inner surface of the bark. If it appeared to Mr. Irwin that sap was oozing from the surface of the uncut roots and these appeared healthy, I hope that specimens were sent to Kew or Oxford or Cambridge laboratories, in order that microscopic investigation might be made into the condition of those roots, for one would still suspect some injury was attaching to them. Twice I have heard of this phenomenon. In one case, a walnut tree on a lawn, the grass-cutter seemed to be the sufficient cause; in another case it was again the birch tree that was affected, but my information goes no further in this case. The subject is one that calls for full investigation, and the observations made in this case are of great interest.—H. R. B.

PAINT OVER PAINT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—To paint over some varnished painted surfaces, however smooth, is bad workmanship. If the varnish is of poor quality it will absorb fresh moisture from the new paint and will "crinkle" up, making the new superimposed paint present a corrugated or roughened surface in the course of a few weeks or months.—KENNACK SANDS.

THE FIDDLE STONE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—When I first, in or about the year 1883, saw the memorial locally known as "The Fiddle Stone," it was leaning against the walls of Castle Caldwell,

situated on a promontory in Lough Erne, County Fermanagh. Subsequently it was removed some one thousand two hundred yards to its present position on the roadside immediately opposite the railway station of Castle Caldwell. The letters D D D on the lower portion of the stone are said to stand for "Denis Died Drunk." The inscription is quaint, and speaks for itself of another time and manners. — HERBERT TREVELYAN.



"DENIS DIED DRUNK."

black ants working along a bank and across a road or footpath; generally they cross from one gatepost to the other. Now, if anyone lifts a piece of dead bark and finds a big fat woodlouse ensconced beneath he can soon have an object-lesson in turning turtle; take the woodlouse up without injuring it, then drop it on its feet in the midst of the string of passing ants. One of these will speedily find it, and he will call companions to his help; these will at once mount the woodlouse's back, place their hind legs on one side of its plate, gripping under the other, and then, on a heave-all-together principle, they will turn the woodlouse right over. If those on the job have not a sufficiency of strength, they will repeatedly send for extra help until they get enough to turn the broad-backed insect over, when it is completely at their mercy. They cannot turn it over beneath a piece of bark, as there is not room, and evidently the woodlouse cannot settle down so tight on a loose, dusty surface like the road as it otherwise might on a piece of wood.—ELDRÉD WALKER.

FOLK-LORE OF THE HONEY-BEE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It is only of late years that the belief in reclaiming a swarm of bees by making a din has partially died out. Only a short time ago there was to be seen the entire household of a cottage out after a swarm of bees, beating upon all sorts of tinware, blowing a whistle, and working at the loudest bird-scaring clappers in the hope of arresting the flight of the swarm. And it was no unusual sight to see a middle-aged man, carrying "a skep," following the crowd to the spot where the queen had settled. He kept quite cool as he swept the queen and her immediate following with his hand into the skep, holding it until the whole swarm had followed, when he would as calmly walk back and set up the skep on a stand in the rightful owner's garden. Such a man was known as "a bee-charmer," and this he would do without removing a single "tang." It was such as he who would tell the bees in a whisper of the death of their owner, and what he did was called "bee telling." He it was who made it part of his work to attend when notice was given to him of a swarming imminent; but if it was in May, he would not trouble, but say, "Ler 'em goo," for he well knew that

A swarm o' bees
i' May,
'S not worth a
load o' hay,

a load being equal to what a man could take up on "a two-prong fork." He, too, draped the hive in black—an apron or an old petticoat—when an owner died, and if the owner was "a widow-woman," he tied a white strip on the top of the hive-skep



THE BIG BLACK-BACK GULL: IMMATURE PLUMAGE.

after telling the bees. How long these symbols of death remained was a matter of sentiment, and I have seen them for a whole week or only for a day. The "bee-charmer" did these things by request if the folks of the house were afraid of the bees. In all cottages it was held to be a sin to kill a honey-bee, and if a bee got on the wrong side of the window, the softest bit of cotton stuff was fetched out, the bee caught with it and liberated at the open door. It was so with the bumble or "bank" bee, the latter name given to it because of its habit of making its comb, or "cum," in the side of a dry and sunny bank. The bee-charmers were men whose work was in the village, such as "stockinners," cobblers or the blacksmith, for when bees "went swarmin'," the menfolk would be at work in the fields.—THOMAS RATCLIFFE.

A TAME GULL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you two photographs of the big black-back gull, showing what the young birds look like at three and four months old. As everybody knows, when these gulls are first hatched they are little fluffy balls of down speckled with brown, but in about a month little quill feathers begin to appear in both wing and tail, and by the time they attain the age of three or four months they have got practically all their feathers, which are speckled brown and white. By very slow degrees these brown spots disappear, and the breast and head become whiter and whiter, till they eventually get to a pure white, and the back and wings become black. It is five to six years before they attain the full adult plumage. Their chief food naturally consists of fish, although they will quickly devour birds and mice; they are also very fond of cheese and raw liver. As long as they can get fresh food they will not even look at anything at all "high or putrid." The accompanying photographs are of young tame

ones, and we find their favourite fish are herrings, mackerel and eels; sprats they will not eat, however hungry they are. When they were at the age of about ten weeks they could swallow a herring whole, which perhaps is not to be wondered at considering the size to which they are able to expand their throats, even when they are quite young. They always swallow all their fish head first, and either wash it before or drink directly afterwards. If they are at all frightened they will bring up their food again. One day this happened about one and a-half hours after a herring had been eaten, and by then the head had completely disappeared, and when touched the flesh fell away from the bones. For several days they will eat ravenously, after which for three or four days they will barely touch anything. They naturally require a great deal of water, and we have a large flat bath always full in which they spend a long time washing; if the water is at all dirty they will not get in, but directly fresh is put in they jump in at once. They are very mischievous birds and not at all good gardeners, as they will pull up or break off all the plants and flowers and generally take them to the water and "wash" them. Slugs and worms they will eat. If they happen to see an unfortunate toad



THREE MONTHS OLD.

they at once seize it and dash it on the ground till it is dead, or sometimes they will leave it half dead. Their beaks are very strong and very rough inside, and if they catch hold of your finger they will soon make it bleed. In a wild state they are most destructive to other sea-birds, particularly the puffins, which they catch just as they are leaving or entering their nesting-holes, and at once kill and generally eat them. In one of the great breeding-places there was one particular rock which we noticed, evidently a favourite place of theirs, as at the bottom there were many remains of puffins, and we had evidently disturbed a feast, as there was the body of one which had just been killed.—ELEANOR SHIFFNER.